Sensational Megadeth ticket offer and competition-details inside!

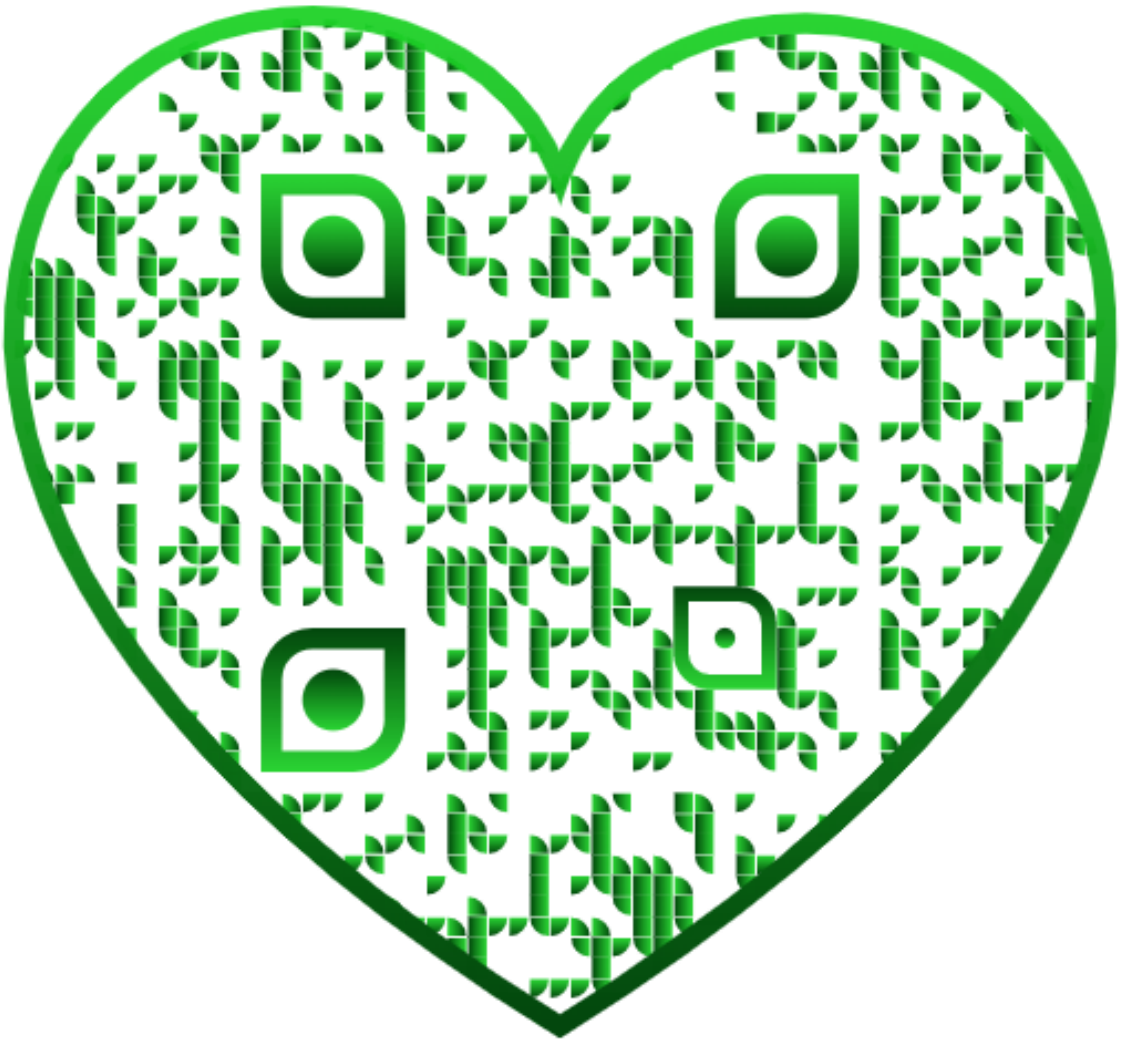
KERRANG!

No 139 February 5-18 90p/DM 5.50

WHEN THE CHIPS ARE DOWN...
Baby Tuckoo and Chrome Molly: British Rock's Last Stand?

Tesla
Manowar
Lee Aaron
Helloween
White Tiger
Georgia Satellites

ROB ARMITAGE of BABY TUCKOO (left) and STEVE HAWKINS of CHROME MOLLY: pic Ross Halfin



HOT NEWZ

'DETH COMES TO EUROPE

■ LOS ANGELES band **Megadeth** (pictured above from left: drummer **Gar Samuelson**, guitarist **Chris Poland**, guitarist/vocalist **Dave Mustaine** and bassist **Dave Ellefson**) are coming to Europe during March to play seven dates, taking in England, Holland, Germany and France. The tour kicks off on March 6 at the **Hammersmith Odeon** and tickets, priced at £5.50, are on sale now from the Odeon box office and all usual ticket outlets.

But that's not all, because thanks to a special arrangement *Kerrang!* readers can obtain tickets at a price of only £4.50 – yes, £1 off the official price! You can do this by cutting out the special voucher on page 41 of this very issue and taking it along to the Hammersmith Odeon box office, where you will be eligible for the sensational offer. Please note that this arrangement is *exclusive* to readers of this magazine and vouchers are *only* redeemable at the box office itself and no other outlets. In addition, this offer remains valid only as long as tickets are still available.

But, this is only the tip of a very special iceberg, because page 41 also contains details of an exclusive competition which offers the chance for two people to fly to Paris on March 15 to see Megadeth headlining a gig at **The Locomotive**. So get cracking with those pens!

Support act for the entire 'Deth 'Killing For A Living' Euro trek will be Phoenix band **Flotsam And Jetsam**, who will be performing with new bassist **Phil Rind**. The ex-**Sacred Reich** man has just replaced **Jason Newsted**, who has of course now joined forces with **Metallica**. And although it remains unconfirmed at the time of going to press, there's a possibility that New York Hardcore mob **The Crumbsuckers** will also be playing at the Hammersmith Odeon show.

■ SWISS AVANT-garde Metallists **Celtic Frost** interrupt the recording of their new album **'Into The Pandemonium'** to play the **Aardshok** festival in Zwolle, Holland on February 8. They will follow up this appearance with selected dates in Germany alongside **Anthrax**.

■ **FOREIGNER** VOCALIST **Lou Gramm** releases his first solo album on February 9. Titled **'Ready Or Not'**, it was produced by Gramm and **Pat Moran** and will be issued on the Atlantic label. First single from the LP is likely to be **'Midnight Blue'**.

■ BASSIST **KID CHAOS** has left **Zodiac Mindwarp & The Love Reaction**. He's been replaced by **Trash D. Garbage** and the new line-up are busily working on an album for Phonogram Records.

As for Mr. Chaos, reports that he has joined **The Cult** seem to be rather jumping the gun. Although it does seem as if he has been helping the band out on their forthcoming album, nonetheless the group's management were at pains to stress that he has *not* been officially welcomed into their ranks.

■ **MAGNUM** WILL issue a new single, **'When The World Comes Down'**, through Polydor on February 23. Full details on this package will be announced in the next issue.

■ **MOTÖRHEAD** GUITARIST **Würzel** will shortly be issuing a solo single on the GWR label. The A-side will feature **'Bess'**, but as yet no more information is available on this record.

Regular callers to the *Kerrang!* Metal Line will have heard a sneak preview of 'Bess' recently.

■ CANADIAN BAND **Aggression** have signed a deal with new label Facemelt Records.

SLAYER GET THE 'LASH

■ *AS PREDICTED in the last issue,* ***Slayer*** *have now officially recruited* ***Whiplash*** *drummer* ***TJ (Tony) Scaglione*** *(right) to replace the recently-departed* ***Dave Lombardo.***

Scaglione made his live debut with the Californian band in New Jersey on January 24, when Slayer supported ***WASP*** *on the first date of their US touring schedule together.*

Commenting on this choice, a spokesman for Def Jam (Slayer's American record company) said: "Scaglione has a slightly different drumming approach to Lombardo, but this won't drastically alter the overall sound of the band."

In the meantime, it seems as if the ramifications of both the song ***'Angel Of Death'*** *(from the* ***'Reign In Blood'*** *album and concerning infamous Nazi butcher* ***Josef Mengele****) and also the debacle over the* ***Aardshok*** *festival has had a significant effect on Slayer in Germany, where there has been an attempt to ban them from all live appearances.*

CHER SHOCKER

■ **CHER**, ONE-TIME consort of **Kiss' Gene Simmons** who has been known to dabble with heavy rock in addition to more Vegas-orientated fodder, could well be moving back towards a harder musical direction in the spirit of **Black Rose**, a rock band she assembled some while ago with former **Gary Moore** band member **Gary Ferguson** on drums. She's now signed a deal with Geffen Records and is currently working on her debut album for the label, with a number of different producers/writers involved in the project.

Desmond Child, for example, who had a hand in writing **'You Give Love A Bad Name'** and **'Livin' On A Prayer'** (both international hits for **Bon Jovi**) has produced one track on the album, **'We All Sleep Alone'**, a number co-written with **Jon Bon Jovi**, and co-produced another with Jon, a cover tune whose title no-one is prepared to divulge at this early stage.

In addition, Cher has recorded a **Michael Bolton** ballad called **'It's Been Hard Enough Getting Over You'**, a track produced by the wonderfully named **Alby Galuten**, a man whose past credits I'm assured include the **Bee Gees**; the likes of **George Martin** and **Ted Templeman**, are also rumoured to have played a part behind the boards.

Could Cher be about to do some serious rockin', swapping her plumed head-dresses for a ripped **Metallica** T-shirt and a **Metal Church** neck-brace? Or am I getting a bit carried away here? In all honesty, I'm sure it's the latter, but it sounds an interesting project nonetheless. Only time (or perhaps the Geffen press office) will tell. DANTE BONUTTO

■ GWR RECORDS will be releasing **'Maggots: The Record'**, the ninth anniversary album from **Wendy O. Williams/Plasmatics**, on March 2. Produced by **Rod Swenson**, it was recorded in New Jersey and as reported in Mayhem a couple of issues ago, it is a loose concept album based around the world being taken over by giant mutated maggots! The full track listing is:

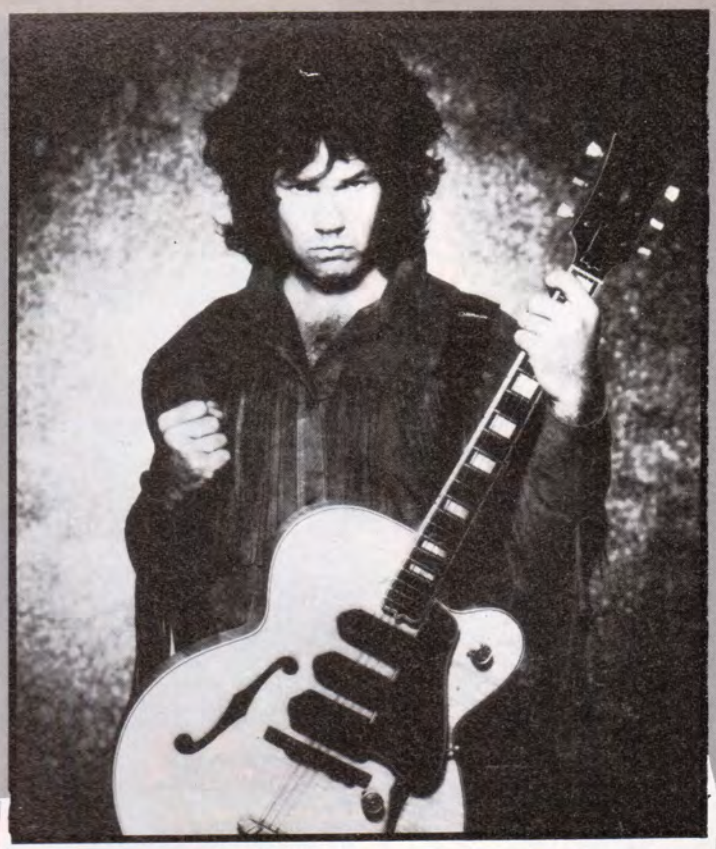
Side One: **'Overture'**, **'Introduction'** (narrative), **'You're A Zombie'**, **'The Whites' Apartment'** (narrative), **'Full Metal Dinner'**, **'The Whites' Apartment'** (narrative), **'The Day Of Humans Is Gone'**, **'The Control Research Laboratory'** (narrative), **'Valerie And Bruce On The Phone'** (narrative) and **'Destroyer'**.

Side Two: **'The Whites' Apartment'** (narrative), **'Bruce's Bedroom'** (narrative), **'Brain Dead'**, **'The Whites' Apartment'**, (narrative), **'Bruce's Bedroom'** (narrative), **'Propagator'**, **'The Whites' Bedroom'** (narrative), **'Fire Escape'** and **'Finale'**.

■ **GUNS N' ROSES** have just begun work on their first full length album with producer **Mike Klink**. The basic tracks are to be recorded at Rumbo Studios in Los Angeles with the mixing stage being done at Can Am Studios in LA.

As yet untitled, this LP will be released by Geffen Records later in the year. Guns N' Roses' line-up is **W. Axl Rose** (lead vocals), **Slash/Izzy Stradlin'** (guitar/backing vocals), **Duff 'Rose' McKagan** (bass/backing vocals) and **Steven Adler** (drums).

■ GWR RECORDS will be putting out albums from New York act **The Cro-Mags** (**'Age Of Quarrel'**) and Canadian foursome **Sword** (their self-titled debut; for review see issue 126) on March 9. Sword intend to play shows in Europe during April/May, following a short stint supporting **Lee Aaron** in Canada.



GAL GOES WILD!

■ ***GARY MOORE*** *(above) issues a new single titled* ***'Wild Frontier'*** *on February 16, a remixed version of the title track of his forthcoming album, set for release through 10 Records on March 9. The single will be available in seven inch/12" forms with a live version of* ***'Run For Cover'*** *appearing on the B-side of the former and the 12" featuring both that number plus three separate versions of 'Wild Frontier' itself: the seven inch, an extended version and a live rendition recorded last year at Milton Keynes.*

The full track listing for the 'Wild Frontier' album is.

Side One: ***'Over The Hills And Far Away'*** *(the first single from the album, reaching Number 20 in the charts),* ***'Wild Frontier'***, ***'Take A Little Time'***, *'and* ***'The Loner'*** *(an instrumental).*

Side Two: ***'Friday On My Mind'*** *(a cover of the old* ***Easybeats*** *song),* ***'Strangers In The Darkness'***, ***'Thunder Rising'*** *and* ***'Johnny Boy'***

The cassette version of the album contains one extra track, 'Over The Hills And Far Away' (12"), and the compact disc two, viz 'Over The Hills . . .' (12") and ***'Crying In The Shadows'***.

Following the release of the album, Moore begins a UK tour on March 26 (Edinburgh Playhouse), playing half-a-dozen shows before heading off into Holland, Belgium, France, Germany, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Spain.

■ **POSSESSED** WILL be releasing a five-track EP through the Combat label in the US during March/April. Co-produced by the band with **Joe Satriani**, it will feature the following numbers: **'Confessions'**, **'My Belief'**, **'Eyes Of Horror'**, **'Swing Of The Axe'** and **'Storm In The Night'**.

MORE MAYHEM OVER PAGE

SEVENTH STARS

■ ***DAVID T CHASTAIN****, the prolific guitarist/composer/producer from Cincinatti, will release a new album – his fifth studio project in just two years! – towards the end of April. Self-styled 'heavy fusionist' Chastain is actually the driving force behind two separate bands,* ***CJSS*** *and* ***Chastain****, and this LP has been recorded with the latter personnel: female vocalist* ***Leather*** *(pictured right), drummer* ***Ken Mary*** *(also a member of* ***Fifth Angel*** *and currently touring the States as a member of* ***Alice Cooper****'s band), bassist* ***Mike Skimmerhorn****, also a part of the CJSS rhythm section, and Chastain himself on guitar, who has taken charge of the production side as well.*

Titled ***'The 7th Of Never'****, the album was recorded over a seven week period at Counterpoint Studios, Cincinatti/Steve Lawson Studios, Seattle/Prairie Sun Studios, San Francisco, where the mxing also took place; engineering was handled by* ***Terry Date****, who recently worked with* ***Metal Church****, and mixing by* ***Steve Fontano****, whose credits include names such as* ***WASP****,* ***Icon*** *and* ***Tony Macalpine****.*

This is the third album from the Chastain line-up and the tracks set to appear are as follows: ***'The 7th Of Never'***, ***'Paradise'***, ***'We Must Carry On'***, ***'Feel His Magic'*** *(a change of pace, apparently, with no guitar break),* ***'Take Me Back In Time'***, ***'Forever More'***, ***'The Wicked And The Restless'***, ***'Too Late For Yesterday'*** *and* ***'A Moment Of Heaven'*** *(instrumental).*

The album will be issued on the Roadrunner label in Europe/Leviathan in the US and, as usual, Chastain the man has written all of the music and, with the exception of 'The Wicked And The Restless' where Leather lends a literary hand, all of the lyrics too.

Expect Chastain the band to take to the road for the first time to back up this release.

DANTE BONUTTO

MAYHEM

FROM PREVIOUZ PAGE

■ WELSH FIVESOME **Rankelson** will be issuing their second album, **'The Bastards Of Rock 'N' Roll'**, on the Ebony label in the near future. Produced by **Daryl Johnston** at Ebony Studios in Hemingbrough, it will feature the following tracks: **'The Bastards Of Rock 'N' Roll', 'Rock The World Tonite', 'We Are Crazy', 'Lovemaker', 'Gallant Soldiers', 'Make It Love', 'Be Good To Me Tonight'** and **'The Happening'**.

■ NEW SAN Franciscan band **Death** will issue their debut album, **'Scream Bloody Gore'**, on the Combat label in the US during March/April. Produced by **Randy Burns** the full track listing is:

Side One: **'Infernal Death', 'Zombie Ritual', 'Beyond The Unholy Grave', 'Denial Of Life', 'Sacrificial C**t'** and **'Mutilation'**.

Side Two: **'Regurgitated Guts', 'Land Of No Return', 'Baptised In Blood', 'Torn To Pieces', 'The Evil Dead'** and **'Scream Bloody Gore'**.

The group, which features **Chuck Schuldiner** (guitar/lead vocals) and **Chris Reifert** (drums), are currently seeking a bassist and second guitarist to complete their line-up, all bass parts on the aforementioned LP having been handled by Schuldiner.

■ SHATTER RECORDS will shortly be issuing the first album from US act **E–X–E**. It's titled **'Stricken By Night'**. And the same label will also soon be putting out the debut album from **Bent Sirkis**. Titled **'Kill Your Immediate Family'**, it's being produced by **Norman Dunn**. In addition, Shatter have also signed **Apollo Ra** and hope to release their as-yet untitled debut LP during the Spring.

■ CANADIAN BAND **Jade** have replaced lead vocalist **Sweet Marie Black** with ex-**Black Knight** singer **Lori Wilde**.

■ FORMER **McCOY** lead vocalist **Nikki Brooks** and ex-**Persian Risk** drummer **Steve Hopgood** have now put together a new band called **Wild!** with bassist **John Alexander** and guitarist **Dave Kilminster**.

A demo from the band is now available and can be obtained by phoning Nikki or Dave on: **01 998 1782** (evenings only). The music is described as 'melodic hard rock à la **Bon Jovi** minus keyboards'.

■ **STEVE MARRIOTT & THE PACKET OF THREE** have now changed their name to **Steve Marriott & The Official Receivers**.

STIFF IT UP

■ *TEXAN BAND **Stiff** will be releasing a five-track EP titled **'Straight Up'** in the near future on an as-yet unspecified label. It was engineered by **Danny Tarsha** at Prime Track Studios and features the following songs: **'Dance'** (with a guest appearance from **Dio** lead guitarist **Craig Goldy**), **'My Number'**, **'Memory Of Me'**, **'So Far Away'** and **'You're Gonna Lose That Girl'**.*

*Pictured above are (from left): **Rob Stratton** (bass), Tarsha, Goldy, **Jon Ster** (guitar), **Ron Taylor** (lead vocals), **Kenny Sizelove** (drums) and **Mikel Scott** (guitar).*

■ FORMER **Trooper** drummer **Jason Clark** has now switched to playing rhythm guitar and is currently putting a new band together to play 'American-influenced raw Metal in the **WASP/Metallica** vein'. Interested parties (in their late teens) should send a tape/biography/photo to: **11 The Hill Avenue, Worcester WR5 2AW**.

■ **WARFARE** WILL shortly be recording a new single for the Neat label. The A-side will feature their version of **Robert Palmer**'s hit single **'Addicted To Love'**, with the title changed to **'Addicted To Drugs'** (which is actually an *anti*-drugs song). The flip will contain two, as yet unnamed, cuts from their recent album **'Mayhem F**kin' Mayhem Hardcore '87'** in remixed form. In addition, the aforementioned LP is to be re-issued by Neat in a black sleeve following complaints about the original cover.

■ TORONTO BAND **Savage Steel** have just put out their debut album, **'Begins With A Nightmare'**, on the New Renaissance label in America.

■ NORFOLK BAND **Kamikaze** have just released a two-track demo tape featuring **'Each Dawn I Die'/'Meet Your Maker'**. Copies are available at a price of £1.50 (incl. p&p) from: **Alex Boyall, Old School Farm, Watton Rd., Shipham, Thetford, Norfolk IP25 7RR**.

■ **HAZE** WILL put out their fourth album, **'Stoat And Bottle'**, through Gabadon Records (with distribution by Pinnacle) on April 4. The full track listing is:

Side One: **'Tunnel Vision', 'In The End', 'Fading Away', 'See Her Safe'** and **'Autumn'**.

Side Two: **'Stoat And Bottle', 'Ophelia', 'In The Universe', 'The Vice'** and **'Last Orders'**.

■ HERTFORDSHIRE BAND **Thin Ice** are currently seeking a new lead vocalist. Interested parties should send a tape/biography/photo to: **Pete Garlick, 36 William Way, Letchworth, Herts SG6 2HG**.

The band will be playing dates at Oxford Corn Dolly February 22, Letchworth The Leys 28.

■ **THE STERLING COOKE FORCE** have just issued a new album on the Ronson Records label in the US, with distribution through Important. The full track listing is:

Side One: **'Shot Gun', 'Down On Love', 'Never Givin' Up'** and **'Livin' By The Days'**,

Side Two: **'I Want My Metal', 'Force Of Habit', 'Need You'** and **'Overloaded'**.

The quartet's line-up is now Cooke (guitar), **Alice Coccio** (drums), **Harry Shuman** (bass) and **Gino Cannon** (lead vocals).

■ CHELTENHAM BAND **December Rose** are currently seeking a bassist. Interested parties should phone drummer **Huw Williams** on: **0242 512294** (evenings *only*, between 5.30 and 8).

■ **VIRTUE** HAVE been forced to delay the release of their three-track EP **'Fool's Gold'** on Hatchet Records until February 6. This is due to pressing problems. In the meantime, cassette versions are available at a price of £1.75 (incl. p&p) from: **Hatchet Records, Garrick Studios, Station Rd., Didcot, Oxon OX11 7NR**.

MORE MAYHEM PAGE 6

STRYKE A LIGHT

■ *A NEW, Texan-based Christian rock band has just surfaced called **Stryken**. The band's line-up is (above, from left): **Ezekiel Vade** (bass), **Dale Streiker** (vocals/lead guitar), **Stephen Streiker** (vocals/guitar) and **Joey Knight** (drums).*

*The group have an album titled **'First Strike'** available through US company Chrystal Records plus a 12" single released on the same label featuring the songs **'Rock On'** and **'Surprise'**. This is available in both vinyl and cassette formats.*

FREELANCE SUB-EDITOR/LAYOUT ARTIST

. . . required to work on Kerrang!. Applicants must be able to design pages brilliantly, sub copy accurately, spell Yngwie J. Malmsteen correctly and be willing to work in a madhouse. Write to: Geoff Barton, Editor, Kerrang!, Spotlight Publications, Greater London House, Hampstead Road, London, NW1 7QZ.

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FROM PAGE 4

'FIELD RESEARCH

East Enders THE OUTFIELD are already massive in the States, but will anyone give them the time of day at home?

THE OUTFIELD: unleashed in the East . . . End, that is!

■ YOU PROBABLY don't know this, but the most successful British band to emerge in America last year wasn't **Iron Maiden, Ozzy Osbourne** or **Def Leppard**; it just happened to be a small band from the East End of London called **The Outfield** . . . still none the wiser? Well, lemme explain . . .

Three years ago, **Keith Goodwin**, a well-known London-based PR man, hounded me into checking out a small-time band called **The Baseball Boys**. I can remember walking into a virtually empty pub, the King's Head in Fulham, and being totally blown away by a three-piece outfit with the catchiest songs I'd heard in years – since **The Police**, in fact – but songs that still R.O.C.K.E.D out with the best of 'em. Imagine a generous musical combination of **Van Halen, Thin Lizzy** and **Toto**, but with simply superb harmonies, the type used to massive effect by **The Beatles** and, I suppose, The Police. That first bite was enough to send me crackers and I followed them around the pub circuit for the whole Summer, enthusing like the silly bugger that I am and eventually easing off the gas when they finally copped a record deal with CBS/Columbia – every UK label had shown them the door, some had even failed to respond to their tapes . . .

And now two years later I'm enthusing about them yet again, only now they're called The Outfield, have had a No 2 single in America with 'Your Love', have sold nearly two million copies of their debut LP in North America alone and can headline live shows of 30,000 very easily thank you very much. Not bad going, eh?

Actually, on the live front they've already played around 200 shows in America, headlining some and also supporting acts such as **The Hooters, Starship** and until recently **Journey**, groundwork that has kept them in the *Billboard* Top 100 LP chart for over 55 weeks . . . and believe it or not, they're still selling like buggery!

The album that started all this off is called **'Play Deep'** and at long last it's been granted a domestic release. However, despite its commerciality, it doesn't look set to repeat its phenomenal American success . . .

"It's really frustrating," reckons guitarist and songwriter **John Spinks**, a chap whose East End accent isn't far removed from that of **Maiden**'s **Steve Harris** (the other two members are bassist/lead vocalist **Tony Lewis**, and drum man **Alan Jackman**). "All we want is for the British music industry to admit that they were wrong, that's all. I just wish they'd give us a chance, play our records, write about us . . . any bleedin' thing just to let the public know who we are. That's not too much to ask for, is it?"

Nah, certainly not John. I reckon, given half the chance, The Outfield could be just as popular in the UK as they are in the US, but the media is strongly against them simply because of ignorance. Whether CBS in this country will be able to change that is anyone's guess, but what with the influx of good strong hard rock into the singles chart of late there's certainly a chance that The Outfield could crack it here in a big way too.

Right now, they're tucked away in London's Air Studios complex recording a new album with producer **Bill Wittman** (he worked on 'Play Deep'; his previous credits include **Scandal**'s platinum-selling LP **'The Warrior'**), which should be out during the Spring of '87. And guess what? There's a chance that they'll actually be playing live dates here around the same time. Personally, I can't wait, so take a tip from me and get in on the action now to avoid the Spring crush, if you know what I mean!

DEREK OLIVER

WIMPWIRE

BEGINNING A REGULAR NEW AOR COLUMN BY DEREK OLIVER

■ *BORED WITH Moshing? Neck broken? Lying in traction hoping to hear something relaxing instead of the latest jaw-cracking* ***Bathory*** *demo? Well, this could be the column you've been waiting for! Utterly Frash free and filled to the brim with newz of emotive, evocative, extraordinarily excellent AOR bands . . . the kind of music, in fact, that* Kerrang! *has a tough time keeping up to date with cos there's just so much of the bleedin' stuff around!*

Actually, I see what's on offer here as more or less a companion piece to ***Don Kaye****'s excellent (but rather ball-bustin'!)* Deathvine *colum – a sort of AOR platform with upfront, outasight details and mini-reviews of import LPs, demos, tit-bits and even a smattering of lip-licking gossip. The best thing, though, is that you can help! Howzat? Easy. Clue me in on any new AOR bands you might have discovered with full details of available product, etc. and you'll get a pat on the back along with the satisfaction of sharing your discovery with other AOR fanatics. Better still, if you happen to be in a band that's strictly for wimps, then drop us a line – together with a demo – and if you pass the* Kerrang! *kwality detector (*That means if you set his sausage twitching – Ed.*) you might get a mention or possibly a rave review!*

That there's never been more interest in North American rock music goes without saying (the recent runaway success of ***Bon Jovi, Boston, Cinderella*** *and* ***Eddie Money*** *proves that beyond any doubt), and the repercussions are obvious: record companies over the coming year will almost certainly be looking towards melodic rock acts to achieve even greater commercial stature. America, as usual, is leading the way, but there's a high proportion of European 'baby acts', spearheaded by the surprise chart crunch of* ***Europe****, who could easily infiltrate America's otherwise closed ranks . . . groups like* ***Frontiers, Skagarack, Marathon, Moritz, Love Attack*** *and* ***Arena*** *(don't fret now, all these plus many more will be dealt with, though Skagarack of course you'll already know, I hope!). And as for North America . . . well, let's say you're in for a real treat next time this column goes to print!*

EDDIE MONEY: his new single 'Take Me Home Tonight' is 'heartily recommended'

But for starters I've decided to plough through a heap of American import albums, all featuring singer/songwriters and released during the closing months of last year; albums that because of frustrating space restrictions didn't get reviewed in Kerrang! *but are nonetheless of such gorgeous quality and artistic merit that passing them by would really be quite indefensible. I've taken the liberty of giving them a personal K-rating, but all are worthy of purchase – even at import prices (nine quid or thereabouts) – and I'm pretty certain that they won't prove disappointing for any fan of hard-edged American rock. Most, nay all, can be obtained from* Shades Records *in London, and if your interest is aroused you'd be well advised to give 'em a ring to check on price and availability.*

Right, let's go . . . First on the couch is ***'Ten Stories'*** *by* ***Jeff Scott*** *(CBS Records/KKK), who despite possessing an annoying rasp similar to* ***Bryan Adams'*** *manages to redeem himself in the nick of time with lush, expensive melodies that somehow remind me of all the best bits on that debut* ***Asia*** *album. Scott (*not ***Jeff Scott Soto*** *of* ***Yngwie J. Malmsteen****'s* ***Rising Force****) recorded the LP in Los Angeles and has no previous credits as far as I can suss out, but appears to be one of CBS' priority artists so you'll definitely be hearing more of this young man in the future.*

Similar stuff can be found on ***Paul Janz****'s* ***'High Strung'*** *LP (A&M Records/KK½), a palatable collection with a touch of soul filtering through obvious hard rock ambitions. Minor but fun, Janz I seem to recall was once a member of soul/pop outfit* ***Deliverance****; nothing to boast about for sure, but interesting all the same!*

And then there's ***E. Wade*** *with* ***'Foreign Shores'*** *(Casablanca Records/KKK), a snappy, highly polished slice of professional AOR put out on the recently resurrected Casablanca label (Seventies home of* ***Kiss, Angel*** *and obscure pomp rockers* ***Stallion****!) and produced by none other than* ***Paul Sabu****! A sideways move from traditional fare, E. Wade sounds like a subversive combination of* ***Rick Springfield*** *and the* ***Cars****, hinting at even more bizarre stuff similar to the* ***Max Demian Band*** *(one for the konnoisseurs amongst you!).*

Todd Sharp, Bob Welch*'s handy guitar playing sidekick, has at last come up trumps with his solo album* ***'Who Am I'*** *(MCA Records/KKK½), a cool, calm and collected slice of dependable hard rock (sometimes devastatingly so) with some clever dance rhythms thrown in for good measure – he's got a great voice too! Clever musicianship too from drummer* ***Gary Ferguson*** *(ex-****Channel*** *and* ***Gary Moore****, now with the* ***Geezer Butler Band****),* ***Stan Lynch*** *(****Tom Petty****'s drummer),* ***Christine McVie*** *(****Fleetwood Mac*** *keyboardist/vocalist) and* ***James House*** *(of Infinity Records act* ***Dixon House Band****).*

NIGHT RANGER: rumour has it that their upcoming LP is 'quite a corker'

On a similar level, is ***Max Carl****'s* ***'Circle'*** *(MCA Records/KKK), superbly produced by* ***Peter Hauke*** *(who has recently worked with* ***White Lion*** *from New york and German rockers* ***Craaft****); the album features bassist* ***Jimmy Hasslip*** *(ex-****Blackjack****) and keyboard man* ***Tony Carey*** *(ex-****Rainbow****). Strong melodies and lush, expansive vocals (like* ***Sammy Hagar****) make this a tough rocker of lasting quality.*

Van Stephenson*'s latest LP,* ***'Suspicious Heart'*** *(MCA Records/KKKK), is clearly his best work, similar to Bryan Adams and* ***Eric Martin*** *but much heavier, rebounding with fast, frothy rockers and a good-natured set of distinctive melodies. It's been given a UK release so hopefully you won't have to fork out a fortune for it.*

'Lights On' *(CBS Records/KKK) by American duo* ***Price-Sulton*** *has a strong high-tech feel to it with an appealing Heavy Metal backbone provided in the main by* ***Steve Stevens'*** *ultra-wild guitar playing (Stevens, of course, is best known for his work with* ***Billy Idol****).* ***Thommy Price*** *is/was (nobody's sure at the moment!) Idol's drummer and also appears on new Elektra female rock hope* ***Joan Paladin****'s forthcoming LP, whilst* ***Kasim Sulton*** *used to play bass with* ***Utopia*** *and, very briefly, keyboards with* ***Cheap Trick****.*

Anyone remember ***Breathless****? Or even* ***Donnie Iris****? No, probably not, but if you do the names of* ***Marc Avsec*** *and* ***Kevin Valentine*** *will probably have you quivering with excitement. Avsec and Valentine were once members of Breathless (a band led by* ***Jonah Koslen*** *– where he now?) and until recently Donnie Iris' band. Today, however, they're back in the swing of things with an LP credited to Avsec titled* ***'Cellarful Of Noise'*** *(CBS Records/KKK½), a record that blends Rick Springfield's forceful power pop with the soothing sound of Journey; typical product for the US airwaves and surprisingly good to boot!*

Glenn Burtnick *might not have much of a name (actually he used to be in a truly awful pop group called* ***Helmet Boy****!), but he's the man responsible for the* ***'Talking In Code'*** *album (A&M Records/KKKKK), which between you and me is perfection for those who like it loud. Brisk, uncompromising shots of fierce melodic rock punctuated by sharp twists and turns make Burtnick an awesome, and yet unrealised, star who to my mind rates second only to* ***Michael Bolton****! The album features contributions from several well-known rockers including* ***Alan Pasqua*** *(keyboards, ex-Eddie Money),* ***Steve Smith*** *(drums, ex-Journey),* ***Neil Stubenhaus*** *(bass, ex-****Pages****, the band who later evolved into* ***Mr Mister****) and* ***Bobby Messano*** *(guitar, ex-****Starz****/****Fiona****) . . . not a bad bunch, eh?*

On a slightly more contemporary note there's ***'The Boyfriend'*** *by* ***Danny Wilde*** *(Island Records/KKKK½), a sharp-looking rocker who's turned in a neat set of tough, vital, sometimes poignant songs akin to* ***Charlie Sexton****. A touch of the* ***John Cougar Mellencamps*** *creeps in, but then that's no bad thing in my book and this definitely is my book . . . well, column actually! The musicianship is confident, assured and delivered by some good players including Mr Mister drummer* ***Pat Mastellotto****. Wilde's previous credits include leading* ***Great Buildings*** *(a band who put out a solitary LP on the CBS label in 1981), pop rockers* ***The Quick*** *(who had a couple of LPs released on the Mercury label in the Seventies) and session work on two or three* ***Robert Palmer*** *albums. Good Stuff!*

Last but not least is ***'Race to Paradise'*** *from* ***Jeff Paris*** *(Mercury Records/KKKKK), a record of superb commercial Metal highlighting Paris' gritty vocals and sassy guitar playing. Always spectacular, he manages to mix mighty power rock with lilting, melodic ballads and could easily slip into the solo shoes recently vacated by Sammy Hagar . . . tough music and sweet looks!*

And there you have it! I passed on half-a-dozen or so (they'll

MORE WIMPDOM OVER PAGE

FROM PREVIOUZ WIMP PAGE

have to wait) but what I've reviewed here shows clearly that there is in fact no shortage of quality melodic rock. Oh, and don't run away with the impression that just because I've been concentrating on solo artists I've forgotten about real bands! Actually, the next Wimpwire *column will be handed over exclusively to an amazing selection of groups (not previously mentioned in* Kerrang!*) from pomp prima donnas to relatively raunchy AOR rockers . . . bands who deserve space simply because they're doing it a lot better than those already in the spotlight (wait till you read about the* ***Untouchables****!).*

On the gossip front, I've heard that the new ***Night Ranger*** *LP is quite a corker, bearing a finely tuned resemblance (long overdue) to their classic debut album yet boasting the top notch production techniques introduced on the* ***'7 Wishes'*** *opus. Recording was undertaken at Fantasy Studios in San Francisco with production being handled by the band and* ***Kevin Elson*** *(the man who put the parp into* ***Europe****!), the same feller in fact who is now working on the latest* ***Virginia Wolf*** *LP (and at the same studios!). Rumours that drummer* ***Jason Bonham*** *have left the band to join the reformed* ***Led Zeppelin*** *are incorrect, although it is known that he did spend some time late last year rehearsing with* ***Jimmy Page*** *in London.*

Look out for a new ***John Waite*** *LP shortly, with mixing just completed at the Hit Factory, New York.*

White Lion*, the hotly tipped New York rockers, are currently finalising a substantial deal with Atlantic Records and will fly to Los Angeles in March to commence work on a new album with producer* ***Michael Wagener****. Material recorded last year in Germany has now been abandoned . . . for full details you'll have to wait until the next interview!*

If you thought that ***Taxxi****, the expatriate British radio rockers, had all but chucked in the towel then think again because they've just started work on a new album – tentatively titled '****Falling Rain****' – in New York for MCA Records, a project involving a variety of producers including* ***Randy Jackson*** *and* ***Phil Kaffel****, best known for his work with Eddie Money . . . talking of whom, Mr Money was recently in town promoting his new album, '****Can't Hold Back****', and single, '****Take Me Home Tonight****', both heartily recommended.*

JOHN WAITE: new album imminent

DEATHVINE

UNDERGROUND METAL NEWZ BY DON KAYE

THE NEW **Voivod** LP, **'Killing Technology'**, will be issued in March on the Noise International label. The full track listing is: **'Killing Technology'**, **'Overreaction'**, **'Tornado'**, **'Forgotten In Space'**, **'Ravenous Medicine'**, **'Order Of The Black Guards'** and **'This Is Not An Exercise'**. Two other recorded numbers, **'Cockroaches'** and **'Too Scared To Scream'**, won't make the album but may be used for a later EP.

And then there's **Celtic Frost**; their new album, as reported recently in Mayhem, is called **'Into The Pandemonium'** and along with a requiem written by guitarist/vocalist **Tom G. Warrior** will also feature the first Frost number penned by American drummer **Reed St. Mark** (the track in question is titled **'The Inevitable Factor'**). The LP is due for a March/April release on Noise. Incidentally, the band is staying as a three-piece for now, the search for a permanent second guitarist having failed.

I expect both Frost and Voivod to show considerable musical progress on these LPs, with both bands emerging as major Thrash voices in the coming year.

As for the demo scene, well, San Francisco is hot as always, with lots of quality tapes spewing out of the Bay Area.

Two of the best to come to light in the past month are the debut tape from **Violence** and the second demo from the much-ballyhooed **Blind Illusion**.

Violence are a quartet whose four-song tape contains what we've come to expect from 'Frisco bands: lots of technical, chugging riffing, shifting rhythms and melodic soloing. Good stuff, though the vocals are a weak point, sounding rather hollow. Still, it's standard 'Frisco Metal and a good bet.

Write to: Violence c/o **Phil Demmel, 11674 Los Ranchitos Ct., Dublin, CA 94568 USA**.

As for Blind Illusion, they're already the pick to click in several underground Metal circles. Consisting of **Marc Biedermann** (guitar/vocals), **Geno** (bass) and **Mike Miner** (drums), they take the classic 'Frisco sound and add on a greater level of complexity, along with some mean guitar work. Ultimately, the songs are also more memorable than those of Violence, and the vocals are more aggressive as well. Expect to see these guys land a deal soon, and I want to be the first in line for the feature.

In the meantime, write to: Blind Illusion c/o Marc Biedermann, **2009 Dunn, Richmond, CA 94801 USA**. Highly recommended!

There's always something going on in Canada these days, and it's my pleasant duty to bring another new Canuck bunch to your attention.

Soothsayer hail from Quebec and have obviously been to the **Slayer** School Of Thrash, with side courses in Voivod and **Sacrifice**. All in all, it's a predictable tape, with most of the songs sounding the same, but I give 'em credit for decent production and a good level of intensity. They should write more songs like **'Build The Terrorism'**, which isn't all 1000mph and has more identity to it.

Write to: Soothsayer, **PO Box 5201, Beauport, Quebec, G1E 6B8, Canada**.

Hailing from Denmark are **Prophets Of Doom**, who are influenced more by **Trouble**, **Black Sabbath** and the late **Mercyful Fate** than the likes of **Kreator** and Slayer. That's fine, but most of the songs on their four-track second tape (the first was recorded under the name of **Prophecy**) become too complicated for their own good, starting energetically before getting lost in unremarkable riffs and vocals. Still, they get points for attempting to stay away from total Thrash, although the best number here, **'Beyond The Black Horizon'**, is a straightforward steamroller.

Write to: **Per M. Hansen, Skibhusvej 90, 3TH, DK-5000 Odense, Denmark**.

Two local fanzines have come to my attention lately, one already on its seventh issue, the other its second. ***Total Thrash*** comes out of Philadelphia and is geared towards the Hardcore side of things, with features on **DRI, SOD, Cryptic Slaughter** and **Chronic Fear**, as well as **Sepultura** and **Sodom**. The layout, printing, and writing are all clearly amateurish, but the many album/demo reviews are on-target.

Send $1.50 to: *Total Thrash*, c/o **Scott Helig, 2127 Tryon St., Philadelphia, PA 19146 USA**.

On its second and much-improved issue is ***Cutthroat***, which includes stories on **Possessed, Dark Angel, Artillery** and Trouble, as well as concert reviews of **Metallica**, Slayer and the **Crumbsuckers**; there are also album/tape reviews. Layout and printing are adequate, with lots of pics and logos, and the writing is sharp and intelligent.

Send $2.00 to: *Cutthroat*, c/o **Jeff Kitts, 120 Harold St., Staten Island, NY 10314 USA**.

Remember, fanzines are the best way to find out about new bands and demos, *and* how to contact them.

That's all for now, except to say that I appreciate the response to the column so far. Keep sending tapes and 'zines to: Deathvine, c/o **Don Kaye, 261-D Signs Road, Staten Island, NY 10314 USA**.

SOOTHSAYER from Quebec: '. . . obviously been to the Slayer School Of Thrash . . .'

PANDORA PEROXIDE — **by Ray Zell**

BARCLAY JAMES HARVEST

BTH

FACE TO FACE

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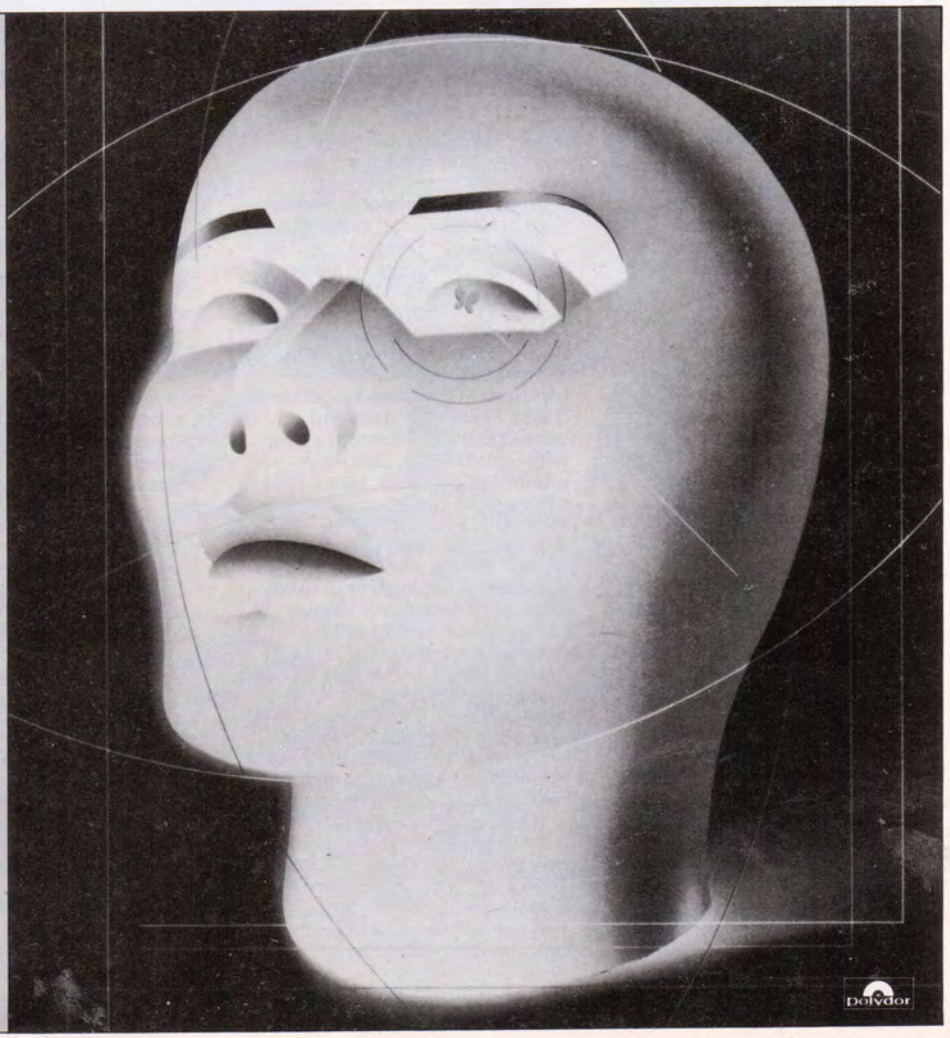


K: Kompost!
KK: Klueless!
KKK: Kompetent!
KKKK: Korrosive!
KKKKK: Kolossal!

CANE AND ABLE

THE RODS: 'Vintage Power Metal, loud and riff-infested'

THE RODS
'Heavier Than Thou'
(Zebra Records ZEB 9)
KKKK

'HEAVIER THAN Thou', eh? These boys don't mince words, and being no bantamweight myself (more in Eric Bristow's blubber league, actually!) I'll certainly give 'em the benefit of any doubt that may arise . . . not that there is any. Absolutely NOT! Just when you thought it was safe to throw away that musty, moth-bitten copy of their disappointing second LP 'Wild Dogs', Noo Yawk's finest blood 'n' guts power trio, the Rods, have made a scorching comeback; and 'Heavier Than Thou' is ample proof!

But just when and where did things first go wrong? Well, in my flabby view it was the aforementioned '. . . Dogs' album that initiated the downward spiral. Compared to the primal savagery of their debut LP (a record that had Geoff Barton bellowing "WOOAARRGH!" and scribbling 'show us your Rods' on top of his lunch box), it was derivative, characterless and stifled by an horrendous production (courtesy of Martin Pearson). All-in-all, a record very definitely removed from the band's true fervour. A mistake that lost them a lot of genuine fans, ushering in a frustrating future that saw them tottering through several independent labels with limited finance, hardly any tour support and a bunch of feeble albums to boot!

It'll come as little surprise, then, that the Rods placed their activities on ice and contemplated splitting for good. That was early in 1986 and one result of this temporary hiatus turned out to be a studio project called Hollywood put together by the three band members (drummer Carl Canedy, guitarist David 'Rock' Feinstein and bassist Gary Bordonaro) along with vocalist Rick Caudle. An attempt to diversity, take a foot off the Metal pedal and touch up the rust spots with a little sophistication (keyboards even!). To my mind, however, it was an incomplete package with little substance and minor league songs, though it *did* sell a respectable amount of units . . .

"Passport Records (the US label; a substantial and experienced indie of several years standing) were pleased with the sales," Carl Canedy told me recently, interrupting production duties on an album by glam rockers Roxx Gang. "But at that time the Rods as a band had practically been wound down; Gary was, and still is, working on a project with Kim Simmonds (ex-Savoy Brown) and I was getting offers of production work . . ."

As it happens, one of Canedy's first production projects was an album for guitarist Jack Starr, recorded in France. Whilst there, Starr introduced him to a Dutch-born vocalist by the name of Shmoulik Avigal (blimey, what a gob full!), who at that time was in a band called Horizon (they had one album released through CBS in Holland titled 'Master Of The Game'), having previously sung with Picture (check out their 'Diamond Dreamer' LP for further proof of his lung power!). Canedy, like Starr, was impressed with Avigal's incredible style, best described as a cross between David Coverdale and Ronnie James Dio, and without the usual diction problems inherent in many European vocalists.

Luckily for Canedy, Avigal moved to the States when Horizon folded, being then enrolled into a new, revived version of the Rods. Gary Bordonaro, already committed to Kim Simmonds, opted to stay out so both Canedy and Feinstein called upon bassist Craig Gruber (ex-Rainbow and Gary Moore band), who ironically had been a member of the Rods for eight months prior to Bordonaro's original appointment.

"This time we went back to basics and patched up our weaker points," reckons Carl. "Actually, some of the material was written around the time of the very first Arista record with Craig! I really think we went wrong by trying too hard to diversify; this time we've concentrated on hardcore rockers . . . and it's a lot more fun, believe me."

So, is this a *serious* Rods revival? Apparently so, as the band intend to get behind the record with some heavy touring (in America initially, though European dates cannot be ruled out), and then it'll be back into the studios for another album. In the meantime, however, Carl is producing a couple of bands (including the aforementioned Roxx Gang), but once these are out of the way the Rods will definitely be rolling.

And what about the album? Well, this is certainly the best Rods record since their Arista debut, released way back in 1980. Vintage Power Metal, loud and riff-infested, aided by strong production values (not surprisingly, Canedy handles this side of things) and polished melodies . . . something that the band haven't exploited in some considerable time (check out the last two or three Rods albums).

Good songs, great guitar playing (from Feinstein), big arrangements and mesmerising vocals from Avigal . . . Oh, and listen out for a barnstorming version of Led Zeppelin's 'Communication Breakdown'; wild, rabid and allied to raucous undisciplined energy. More please!

DEREK OLIVER

KILLING IS MY BUSINESS...

MALICE
'License To Kill'
(Atlantic 7-81714-1 import)
KKKKK

Pic Nigel Street

MALICE: getting a bit of star treatment for a change!

SMOG ANGELES' most unfashionable band (apart from Legs Diamond, of course!), Malice, are back with an Absolut (geddit!) killer of an album. It'll be interesting to see how the folk at Atlantic deal with this release as they virtually ignored the lads' last outing, the breathtakingly brilliant 'In The Beginning', which must have sold all of ten copies! Now that Ratt are past their peak it could and *should* be Malice's turn for a little star treatment.

The most immediate difference between 'License To Kill' and its predecessor is a vast improvement in the production department. Now it's a well known fact that Malice were far from happy with Ashley Howe's input on the '. . . Beginning' opus, and anyone who is lucky enough to own a copy of the band's original Michael Wagener-produced demos will realise just what a botch-up job he did on the album. Despite the brilliance of the toons, half the record worked and the other half *stank!*

So this time around Malice sensibly booked themselves into Fiddler's Studios, hiring the services of Max 'On Yer Bike' Norman (his production work on Armored Saint's second 'Delirious Nomad' album has to be heard to be believed). And the end result is quite stunning – class A, highly polished 'Alloy Metal' is the name of the game here, so let's take a look inside . . .

'Sinister Double', a Zane/Behn/Neal composition, opens the account and straight away that familiar Rob Halford-inspired voice of Neal's comes screaming forth – yes, my tumbler of bourbon broke in my hands whilst listening to this 'un! Thankfully, though, it's not a *total* Priest rip-off, the geetars of Jay Reynolds and Mick Zane are far more menacing and aggressive.

The title cut, easily the best song on the album follows, and Master Reynolds really has surpassed himself here – a good catchy riffer and just dig the line-up for the tacky chorus chant; guest growlers include Dave Mustaine and Dave Ellefson of Megadeth plus Jamie St. James, Tommy Thayer and Jeff Warner of Black 'N Blue, who also do a bit more grumbling 'n' groaning on 'Chain Gang Woman', another kommercial outing – and just listen out for the AC/DC piss-take in the middle! These two toons would make a great double A-side, so over to you Atlantic!

Elsewhere, we find 'Against The Empire', which show the likes of Queensrÿche just how to play intricate geetar leads without being pompous about it! And if you like yer riffs heavy 'n chunky look no further than 'Vigilante', with Neal's fine voice once again stealing the show.

Yes folks, 'License To Kill' is easily the best album I've heard since Slayer's mighty fine 'Reign In Blood'. What a way to start 1987! And the good newz is that Atlantic Records are planning to put this out in the UK during March. Let's hope they give it some well-deserved promotion.

XAVIER RUSSELL

MORE REVIEWZ NEXT PAGE

DIRECT KURRENTS

FROM PREVIOUZ PAGE

VARIOUS ARTISTS
'Playing For Keeps'
(Parlophone PCS7306)
K

A MOVIE soundtrack album featuring songs from such people as Phil Collins, Julian Lennon, Arcadia, Sister Sledge . . . in fact, apart from a bit of a belter from Pete Townshend, 'Life To Life', it's a complete waste of time.

With not the barest musical thread connecting the songs, it's surprising that soundtrack albums sell so well. But they *do*, so they'll be plenty more compilations like this – with one or less decent tracks – to come. I'd rather listen to the soundtrack of a Charlie Chaplin silent movie.

PAUL HENDERSON

ROSE TATTOO
'Beats From A Single Drum'
(Mushroom Records 53217 import)
KKKK

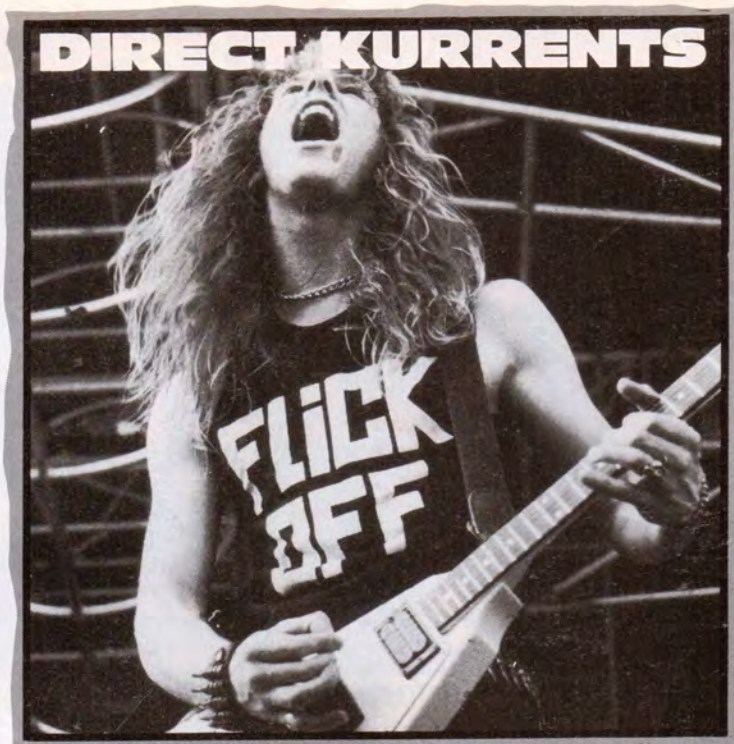
ROSE TATTOO? Nah, leave it out, it's gotta be someone else! Must be! Actually, it *is* the Tatts and what we find is an amazing transformation: from raucous, epic bad boy boogie and malevolent boozin' an' cruisin' to the silken tones of a sound that slips softly into AOR grooves, tanked up with tasty synth licks and magnificent melodies and giving you that 'I've heard it somewhere before' feeling. And you probably have too! No doubt on the last Foreigner or maybe Bad Company waxing . . . Hmmmmm!

Unbelievable but true! No more 'orrible tattoos, no more sweaty biceps and no more 'Scarred For Life' swanky beer-swigging anthems! The only piece of the past still in evidence are the awesome vocals of Angry Anderson, but even he's ditched the 'bad boy' image, crooning in a very 'girly, girly' manner indeed, just like Rod Stewart! But, and I say this with utter conviction, the results are *truly* amazing.

Produced (surprisingly) by REO Speedwagon stalwart Kevin Beamish, Angry and (new) band have delivered a record of quality, a record that for commitment alone cannot be faulted. After their last album, the grim and almost directionless 'Southern Stars', they've rebounded with a frothy, good-natured set of distinctive melodies, mostly in homage to the sound that sells (that's AOR). Hooks, hits and pleasantly joyful harmonies pop up through-and-through, from 'Calling' (a spacious, polished rocker with Fairlight strings can you believe!) to 'Michael O' Reilly' (a rocker of sorts toughened by Angry's distinctive anti-social lyrics.)

I might have found this album incredibly laughable were it not for the substantial quality of the songs and the musicianship. Rose Tattoo (or should that just read Angry Anderson?) have come up with a memorable record full of major hit single potential . . . effective, electric and worth every penny you'll have to pay for it on import.

DEREK OLIVER



METALLICA'S JAMES HETFIELD: 'Master. . .' remastered!

METALLICA
'Master Of Puppets'
(Music For Nations MFN 60 DM)
KKKKK

IF YOU haven't been made mind-numbingly aware of the potency of Metallica's mighty 'Master Of Puppets' album by now then you've been on another planet, my son! Yeah, remember Mick Wall salivating about the strength of the Masters Of Thrash, of their ability to mould the genre and take it out of the rigid domain of Hardcore and into the homes of all good music lovers? Yeah? Well, of course it's all true, of course 'MOP' is genius at play and of course Metallica are steering a heady course for the very top!

However, what Music For Nations are offering us is a very pleasant alternative to the original release. With a running time in excess of 50 molten minutes, the standard album format just couldn't cope with the severe Metal on offer. Result? Serious loss of sound quality and miffed faces all round.

Solution? Re-release the record as a double album, running at 45rpm and with enough groove space to bring out every incy-wincy bit of brilliance! Squeeze those lemons dry, baby!

'Master Of Puppets' Mk II is available as a strictly limited edition of 10,000 in Britain and Europe only, directly Metal (de rigeur) mastered and available at a price of £6.49 with a free added poster. Yup, jump for joy cos the sound quality really is noticeably improved, coming on more like a compact disc than yer regular redundant record. For once this doesn't seem like a record company looking for those elusive fast pennies!

It has to be said, however, that it would have made the album all the more collectable had there been a new sleeve design. Merely reproducing the original inner sleeve in gatefold format seems a little cheap and tacky. And it's curious to note that the running times are different between the original and the new. Maybe Fuehrer Mensch can clear this one up!

As this is review Number Two (the lucky bleeders!), all I need to add is, yup, this is a totally awesome release and new bassist Jason Newsted is the luckiest bugger about! Ta-ra music lovers!

HOWARD JOHNSON

AGENT
'Agent'
(Virgin Records VL2386 import)
KKK

Consummate MOR professional rock and wimpish bludgeon from a new Canadian quintet who, despite a minimum of experience (except in the session musician category), have been signed to Virgin's recently revitalised American label. Predictable, certainly, with not a note out of place, though that doesn't mean it's beyond criticism even from the likes of myself, a well-known supporter of sensitivity.

Side One, although atmospheric and highly polished, takes second place to the flip where there's a nattier dosage of rough-edged arena rock. Solid and consistent, it's these songs that lift 'Agent' one higher than the rather insubstantial two Ks I'd originally intended to award it. The band's biggest problem, then, is consistency, or rather lack of it, a can of worms that becomes plainly obvious as each cut gives way to the next. For example, 'Change Of Heart', a gutsy rocker with razor-sharp guitars, segues into a nondescript and tedious ballad, 'Surrender', a song that would be more at home on the latest Billy Joel waxing.

Despite production by Jeff 'Skunk' Baxter, the ex-Doobie Brothers guitar man, 'Agent' remains in the final analysis a predictable, quietly pleasant collection of melodic rock, and that chums is not enough!

For Softcore fans only, I'm afraid!

DEREK OLIVER

MORE REVIEWZ PAGE 14

FROM THE HEART OF THE USA TO THE HEART OF ROCK N' ROLL

t h e

RAINMAKERS

"THE TRUE HEIRS TO THE CREEDENCE CLEARWATER CROWN" — *Q MAGAZINE*

THE SINGLE: LET MY PEOPLE GOGO

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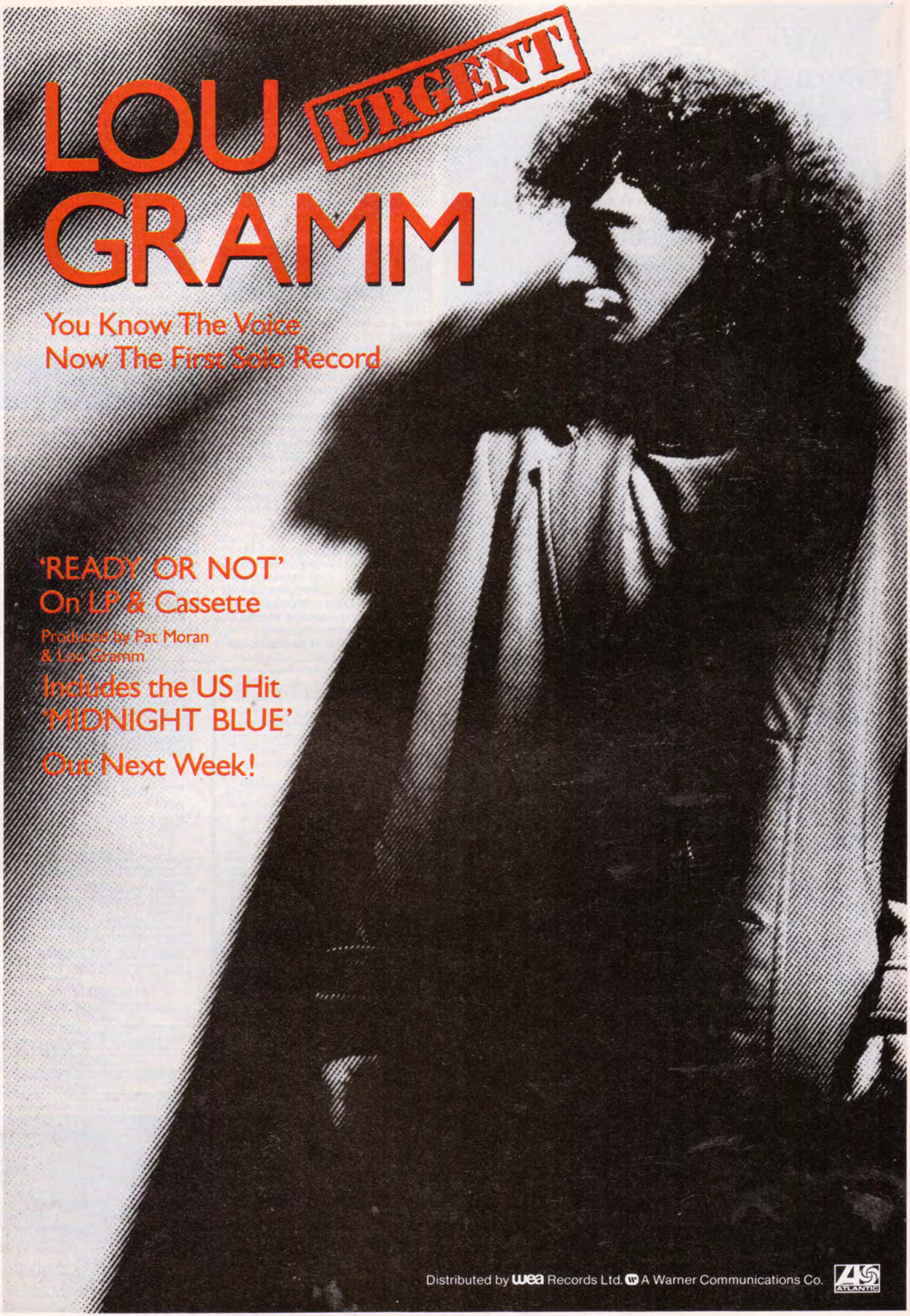
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ATLANTIC

FROM PAGE 12

BARCLAY JAMES HARVEST
'Face To Face'
(Polydor POLD 5209)
KKKK½

IT'S OFTEN been stated in recent times that the British simply cannot compete in the melodic hard rock genre. We bemoan the absence of strong domestic acts to capture the stardust sprinkled by Bon Jovi and Europe, whilst at the same time totally ignoring the fact that we *have* produced several classic bands/individuals in this sphere over the past several years. Russ Ballard, Magnum, John Parr . . . it's not a bad list, is it? The question is: why do we persist in viewing mediocre (or worse!) outfits such as FM and Terraplane as potential saviours (ha!) of the UK hard rock scene whilst turning our backs on the *real* talent? We are, indeed, a peculiar nation.

And now, here's a band who if there was any sort of reason to the whiles of the music business would be enormous in Britain by this stage; this is the latest attempt to conquer what many consider unconquerable – the complete indifference of British ears to BJH's homegrown genius.

Barclay James Harvest are, without a doubt, one of this country's finest and most exquisite exports, having established gigantic followings in Europe and beyond. Yet in the UK they are a cult largely overlooked, not only by the very people who would most enjoy their music but also by Polydor Records themselves. Perhaps this has something to do with their ultra-determination to pursue an individually tasteful path drawing heavily on the golden climes of the early Seventies, an area most BJH fans are well disposed towards though it has often lacked the sort of upfront modern age charisma necessary to pick up a fresh, young audience.

Yet, if anyone were to give this band even a glimmer of a chance they'd be so completely overwhelmed by the ensuing emotional swirl that the Barclays would surely ride headlong to the top of the charts. And with 'Face To Face', BJH have taken massive strides to ensure that they cannot be ignored any longer. Put quite simply, this album shows the world a clean pair of heels as traditional Barclays fare (beautifully constructed melodies allied to a balanced sense of instrumental choreography) is swathed in state-of-the-art tension.

The most extreme reaction comes with 'Panic' and 'African', wherein John Lees induces some bear-hugging guitar histrionics laid up against the brow-beating rhythms of Mel Pritchard (drums) and Les Holroyd (bass). The latter number in particular (a virulently anti-apartheid track that comes over as 'Child Of The Universe Pt. II' . . . with late Eighties relevance) will surely have consciences swaying to the impudent pattern of the music.

Elsewhere, the structure of up-to-date power allied to old-fashioned values is nurtured rather than flayed as a stream of great material is slowly and steadfastly unravelled. 'Prisoner Of Your Love', 'He Said Love', 'Kiev', 'Guitar Blues', 'Wings Of Love' . . . every nuance, every twist is lovingly caressed yet never over-indulged. Perfect AOR for a changing era.

With 'Face To Face' BJH challenge every preconception and misconception about their existence. They *will* rise to the very top on the gale force with this superb offering; have *you* got the balls to ride with 'em?!

MALCOLM DOME

VARIOUS ARTISTS
'The Wraith'
(Scotti Bros 450373 1)
KKK¾

'THE WRAITH' is one helluva bad movie . . . and I'm talkin' disasters here, OK? In fact, with such rubbish on celluloid it's rather a miracle that the accompanying soundtrack LP is actually rather nifty, all things considered.

Now, not all the tracks heard in the movie make it onto this vinyl compilation; presumably stuff such as 'Rebel Yell' (Billy Idol), 'Smokin' In The Boys Room' (Mötley Crüe), 'Addicted To Love' (Robert Palmer) and 'Screams Of Angels' (Nick Gilder) are absent due to financial/legal/political implications. Ah well . . .

But what *does* make the final running order is worth checking out. Some of it might already be familiar to you, namely the fallout flak riffin' of Ozzy's 'Secret Loser', Bonnie Tyler's raunchy 'Matter Of The Heart' and Ian Hunter's 'Wake Up Call' with its dosed-up-on-petrol-fumes vocals. But the rest will, I'm certain, be a new experience . . .

There's the excellent Stan Bush drawing fresh blood with the energetically soulful 'Hearts Vs. Heads', a surprisingly strong melodic burner from Honeymoon Suite ('Those Were The Days'), an absolutely rippin' explosion of street-toughened vocals from the sorely underrated yet quite breathtakingly talented Jill Michaels ('Young Love, Hot Love') and the exquisitely impassioned Bryan Adams-esque Tim Feehan ('Where's The Fire').

On top of all this, there are also more than adequate performances from Lion, LaMarca and James House.

Yeah, this isn't a bad bet for acquisition; shame the movie's so dull.

MALCOLM DOME

TONE NORUM
'One Of A Kind'
(CBS 26868 Shades import)
KK

SOFTCORE AOR from female rocker Tone Norum (sister of John Norum, the recently-departed lead guitarist with chart busters Europe) which fails to achieve the balance, delicacy and toughness needed to satisfy discerning ears. Standard madcap ramblings in the sub-Benatar, Tzuke, Patty Smythe style prevail and there's also an over-abundance of pulpy ballads cluttering up needle time, parodying everyone from Madonna through to Doro Pesch!

Surprisingly, in view of its sheer blandness, the music is mostly performed by Joey

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Tempest (Europe's lustful leader) with some additional help from band drummer Ian Haugland, keyboardist Mic Michaeli and (not surprisingly) John Norum himself who chips in some amazing Yngwie Malmsteen-style guitar solos, which sound appropriately out of place within the lukewarm balladry! Moshing time this is not!

Final verdict: clichés galore and no redeeming features . . . another one hits the bargain bin!

DEREK OLIVER

ABATTOIR
'The Only Safe Place'
(Noise N 0045 import)
K

THE ONLY safe place for this rubbish is the cut-out bin at the dear ol' Rekord And Tape Exchange! Since losing singer John Cyriis and axepert Juan Garcia to the truly wonderful Agent Steel life on the Abattoir front has become very blunt! They can't quite make up their minds whether they want to be a Frash band or not.

They certainly come close on a number of occasions but never seem to have the guts to go the whole hog and cross-over to the FAST side. And what really pissed me off more than anything else was the unforgivable cloning of the vocals of Armored Saint's John Bush, especially on 'Back To Hell' and 'Temptations Of The Flesh'.

Come on Abattoir, I know you can do better than this! Sharpen those blades, speed up those riffs and stop ripping off John Bush, then you could be onto a winning formula. Get on the blower to Brian Slagel, I'm sure he'll be only too delighted to help you out.

XAVIER RUSSELL

DEMON
'The Unexpected Guest'
(Clay CLAY LP 22)
KKK3/4

AN ALBUM first released four and a half years ago, at which time (according to the press release) it reached Number 47 in the album chart. I find that a bit surprising for an LP full of songs with such devillish lyrical topics as possession and whatnot.

On the other hand, '. . . Guest' contains several catchy, quality *rock* songs, cluttered with 'hooks' and sharpened further by some (at times) stylishly Kossoff-influenced guitar playing and an overall *excellent*, powerful vocal performance from the gruff-voiced Dave Hill.

Some of the material *does* sound a bit dated, although tracks like 'Don't Break The Circle', 'The Spell' and 'Victim Of Fortune' manage to retain a strong whiff of freshness.

This re-release could surprise (and please) many.

PAUL HENDERSON

BROOMSTIXX RIDERS
'Rockin' Aliens'
(Suisa SRT6KL767 import)
KK

BACKSTREET GIRLS
'Mental Shakedown'
(Medicine MED 006 import)
KKKK

I OFTEN think that Andy McCoy and I have a lot to answer for. I mean, it's not as if we planned any of this, it just kind of happened. Maybe if we'd sat down and mapped this whole thing out we could both be extremely rich by now. As it is, only McCoy has the odd £50 note or several to rub together (not that the tight-fisted bastard ever buys me a drink!)

Whatever, this whole Glam/Trash thing seems to be picking up with a vengeance in various slums around the world – just the kind of places Mr McCoy and I were often to be seen ligging and waiting for people to buy us drinks. There's a certain art to sleaze'n'lig and McCoy is far more practised artisan than I, though I still manage to pull it off with a degree of aplomb. Shame you can't say the same thing about Broomstixx Riders, a four-piece Trash outfit from Switzerland. Yes, *Switzerland.*

I tried to like this record but failed on all the important counts: I didn't like guitarist/vocalist Brian Blade's voice, I didn't think much of the songs (actually, their best effort is 'Straight To Hell' – which just goes to show I managed to make it onto the second side!) and all that other stuff you either like a record for, or don't, as the case may be.

They also sent along a fresh demo replete with new singer Remi Martyn (no, I don't believe it either) and this, though murky, sounds like a distinct improvement. I could be persuaded to give this lot a second chance.

Now Backstreet Girls, on the other hand, come from Norway and with Scandinavian blood flowing through their veins are in a far better position to pick up the Hanoi mantle. This is a fun record. Great songs, frenetic (if less than totally exact) playing, very Mike Monroe inspired vocals and very Andy McCoy inspired songs. A few titles for you to mull over: 'Mental Shakedown', 'Backstreet Boogie', 'Rattlesnake Charlie' and 'Back In Jail'.

If you loved Hanoi Rocks – and you either loved 'em or hated 'em, right? – then I heartily recommend the Backstreet Girls.

Meanwhile, across the Atlantic, the storm clouds are gathering! Guns 'N Roses, Faster Pussycat, Jetboy . . . keep watching these pages . . . oh Andy, what have we done?

DAVE DICKSON

STEVE MILLER
'Living In The 20th Century'
(Capitol EST 2027)
K1/2

20th CENTURY, but which part?

In his 17 album career, Steve Miller *has* put out some good stuff, but with this release – one side of which contains a series of somewhat unsympathetic interpretations of old bluesers by the likes of Willy Dixon and Jimmy Reed – he's unlikely to please anyone other than himself.

Only a couple of self-penned tracks on Side One show any signs of Miller's past glories, and taken overall it's only as a result of his characteristic vocal and its 'treatments' that this album bears any relationship to, say, 'The Joker', 'Abracadabra' or any of his other oft-quoted 'classics'.

I would expect '. . . 20th Century' to disappoint even *fans* of Steve Miller.

PAUL HENDERSON

SHE'S SO MODERN

"I just wanted to get away from the typical cliché thing – leather 'n' studs and all that, y'know?" MARK PUTTERFORD finds out why LEE AARON (pictured right) has moved away from her 'rather naff' Metal Queen image to adopt 'a more classy, sophisticated approach'

IN A seedy side-street in Shoreditch, deep within the shadowy confines of an old, dodgy-looking building, yet another voluptuous nubile pouts and preens before the priapic Palmer lens. The salacious snapsman sighs and sweats as he fiddles with his equipment, undoing even more buttons on his shirt to expose every last false hair on his chest whilst clicking away excitedly. His sexy subject slips casually in and out of alluring poses, teasing her hair, licking her lips and offering every flash of light a glossy image that'll have rock readers everywhere racing for the shower.

But this gorgeous gal is different. She's Lee Aaron and not *just* a pretty face. To my way of thinking, one of the reasons why wimmin get such a bum-deal in this male-dominated biz is that most of them lack genuine talent, relying too much on the 'novelty' factor to succeed. But Lee . . . well, Lee *does* have something going for her apart from a cute face, a great pair of legs (cont. Ray Palmer's diary). Lee can write, sing, perform . . . and do all three to a pleasing level of proficiency. And, most important of all perhaps, Lee has an obvious aptitude for continual progression.

I know it's a bit of a cliché, but the other night I listened to her back catalogue of albums in chronological order – including a tape of some brand new material – and you could definitely hear that each one was better than the last. 'The Lee Aaron Project' was her finding her feet; 'Metal Queen' was an improvement yet still a bit wishy-washy; 'Call Of The Wild' was more consistent if not ideally produced, and the new stuff . . . well, it sounds like her best yet and I've become immensely fond of it. Better songs, sweet melodies, fitting production . . . a good all-round performance that justifies her presence in the biz more than a thousand sexy snaps.

"I love the new record," the lovely lass beams after Palmer has had his evil way with her, "it's progressing in all areas. I mean, I've done two guitar-based records, so with this one I thought it was time to change and do something different – add a little colour, modernise it a little . . . c'mon, it's 1987 folks, wake up and smell the coffee!"

FOR THE album, recorded over a three-month period at Metalworks Studio (owned by Triumph) in Lee's hometown of Toronto, she made a number of line-up changes, and her band (which you'll be able to see live when they tour here in late Spring) sounds all the better for it. Guitarist and co-writer John Albani remains, as does bassist Chris Brockway, but rhythm guitarist Simon Brierley has been swopped for keyboard player Jim Gelcer, and drummer Randy Cooke – who's "a bit like Simon Phillips and Stewart Copeland combined" – has replaced Kim Hunt. The result, simply titled 'Lee Aaron' "because I feel like this is a new beginning – much more 'me'", is a record that clearly surpasses her last 'Call Of The Wild' effort.

"'Call Of The Wild' was written, recorded and released within a five-month period," Lee explains, "and you really can't come up with a hit record in that amount of time. For this album, we took eight months off to write the material, and I definitely see progression in the writing as a result of that. I think my melodies and lyrics are much better on this record – it *sounds* like more time and thought has been put into it – and the production is like night and day compared to the last LP.

"The thing about the production on 'Call Of The Wild' was this: I got along fine on a personal level with Bob Ezrin, the guy who produced it, but we kinda locked horns in the studio a little. I mean, if you've got any ideas of your own, forget it! But Peter Coleman, the guy I worked with this time, was more like a catalyst, drawing ideas out of you and putting them all into place. Peter – who did four records with Pat Benatar – is always open to your ideas, and consequently this record has more of *me* and *the band* on it than 'Metal Queen' or 'Call Of The Wild'.

"I mean, I sat behind the board during the final mix of every song, and had the chance to change anything I didn't quite like – so I'm completely happy with the sound of the record. However, I wasn't even present during the final mixes of my last album – I was on tour and they mixed it while I was gone!"

LISTENING TO the new LP, which will be on sale in March, one thing that struck me straight away was the more prominent use of keyboards this time around. And on songs like 'Power Line' they really *do* prove effective. But Lee doesn't accept that this shift of emphasis away from the guitar has made the material softer.

"No, I wouldn't say the songs on this album are less guitar-orientated," she considers, sipping at a mug of steaming tea, "because although we have dropped a guitarist, John is still very much up there rocking away.

"However, I would say that we've been a little more experimental with the songs this time – probably as a result of John and I getting together with outside writers like Joe Lynn Turner (formerly with Rainbow), David Roberts and Dan Hill.

"I mean, we did a song called 'Heartbreak Of The World' which is quite unusual and really different for us; we did another called 'Dream With Me' which is quite a slow song with a kind of Gabriel feel to it; and we did another which sorta sounds like Prince meets Def Leppard! It's still a rock 'n' roll album, but it's just a bit more of a progression for us."

And it seems to indicate that, thankfully, Lee is heading away from the rather naff 'Metal Queen' image that, in my humble opinion, didn't suit the pretty and petite singer.

"Yeah, I wanted to get away from the typical cliché thing – leather 'n' studs and all that, y'know? – and go for a more classy, sophisticated approach," she explains. "Musically, I think we sound much more refined this time, and lyrically . . . well, I wanted to write about a lot more topics with positive themes; I was still angry on my last record, whereas this time I'm writing with a whole lot of different emotions. 'Power Line', for example, is actually a very spiritual song if you listen to the lyrics.

"But overall, this album has a lighter, more 'fun' approach than the others . . . and that's pretty much what we're like live," Lee adds. "We're definitely not a 'death-an'-destruction-heads-down-see-you-at-the-end-of-the-set' type of band, we're more of a 'party time' outfit – and that's the kind of approach we wanted to take with this album."

In retrospect, then, does Lee view the whole 'Metal Queen' episode as a bit of a wrong move?

"I was happy with it at that particular time," she replies, "but then you have to remember that the Scorpions, Judas Priest, Def Leppard and those kinds of bands were very, very strong then. *And* at that time I was completely rebellious, whereas over the past few years my personality has changed a great deal.

"Now I have a new image – a classier one – and it's ideal for me at the moment, I guess. But who knows what I'll be dressing like four years from now?"

SO, TO match her undoubted musical improvement, Lee Aaron has clearly wised-up as far as image is concerned. And along with everything else, the experience she now shows, even at 24, makes her a far more believable candidate for big time success than I, for one, thought possible around the 'Metal Queen' era.

"I think women who sing the more aggressive type of rock music have to be careful how they present themselves – and I'm speaking from experience here, because I've been a victim of some criticism on this subject," she says. "I mean, personally I can't see why you can't present yourself the way Dave Lee Roth does, but for some reason when you do that people are always knocking you for it and saying you're using your body to get ahead. So I think you have to be very tasteful about the way you do it in order to be taken seriously as an artist.

"One thing's for sure – I won't be going topless or anything like that!" she laughs, referring to the dreadful time when, as a naive youngster, she posed nude in *Oui* magazine.

"But whatever I do image-wise in the future, it'll be *me*," Lee continues. "In the past I've been manipulated by other people – and I've only myself to blame for being talked into those rather questionable photographs! – but I *was* young and didn't really know what was best for me. But now I've learnt to say 'No' sometimes – even if you do piss people off. These days I'm doing what *I* want to do. I don't really care if people don't like me, I just want them to respect me."

Pic Ray Palmer

I WANNA BE

TESLA: 'sort of Bad-Co-meets-Van-Halen-at-a-party with Zeppelin and Leppard invited too'

ELECTRIC!

DANTE BONUTTO blows a fuse as he gets plugged into Sacramento livewires TESLA, proclaiming the band's current Geffen album 'Mechanical Resonance' to be 'perhaps *the* rock'n'roll record of the year'

WERE IT not for Tesla there could not have been an AC/DC, how's *that* for an opening gambit! A good feature writer, it is said, should grab the reader by the balls with his very first phrase then contine to squeeze sentence by sentence. (Incidentally, the word 'balls' is used here for literary impact only and is in no way meant to be discriminatory.) So, are your eyes starting to water? Right, then let me pile on the pressure . . .

Tesla is the name of a five-piece outfit from Sacramento, California, whose debut LP will certainly stand as one of *the* records of 1987 – despite the fact that it was actually issued in 1986! It wasn't released in the UK until this year, this very month in fact, but over in the States I suspect it found its way into the odd Xmas stocking. 'Mechanical Resonance': 12 tracks of classy heavy rock, consistent in quality, varied in style and certainly more of a cracker than a turkey with no fillers (or should that be stuffing?) in sight. It's on the Los Angeles-based Geffen label and it certainly means business; sort of Bad-Co-meets-Van-Halen-at-a-party with Zeppelin and Leppard, Led and Def respectively, both invited too. Interested? Am I squeezing too hard? Hang on while I sharpen my fingernails cos there's still more to come . . .

'Genuinely earth-shattering' . . .' 'Capable of rockin' the world on its axis' . . . how many times have you come across that sort of phrase in this

KONTINUEZ OVER

I WANNA BE ELECTRIC!

FROM PREVIOUZ PAGE

sort of feature? Quite a lot, I'm sure, but when *Tesla* is the name in question they can no longer be dismissed as the OTT rantings of a desperate scribe with a trip to America hanging in the balance. Oh no, cos I'm talkin' now about the *real* Tesla, Nikola Tesla, perhaps the greatest inventor the world has ever known. In her Five-K album review last issue Sylvie Simmons asked, not unreasonably, 'What the ****'s a Tesla?' W-e-l-l . . .

Tesla it was who harnessed the alternating current we use today (hence the rather flippant AC/DC reference at the start of this piece); Tesla who invented radio; Tesla who invented fluorescent lighting; Tesla who invented the, uh, bladeless turbine; Tesla, Edison's enemy, Mark Twain's friend and mentor to many of the 20th Century's most famous scientists, who introduced the world to the fundamentals of robotics and computer and missile science; and Tesla who has made it possible for modern day writers like myself to tap into the power of some of the most excruciating (though inevitable) puns known to mankind. I suggest we dispense with these now . . .

Right, we've already had the earth-shattering/moving ones – a reference to Tesla's theory that the world could be split in two like an apple by applying the theory of 'Mechanical Resonance'! – so let's say that Tesla The Band, like their namesake, the father of radio and fluorescent lighting, are hoping to make some serious *waves* (groan) and see their name in *lights*. That having just embarked on the David Lee Roth tour in America they are hoping to remain active (*radio* active, of course) and stake their claim as leading *lights* in the hard rock field. Bad enough for you? OK, well let me simply sum up by saying that Tesla The Man, to use a term once employed by Ozzy Osbourne to describe Geezer Butler, "had a g-r-r-r-eat brain!"

THE STORY begins with our hero (ie. me) sitting in the *Kerrang!* office, searching for inspiration amongst the rubble on his desk and coming across a tape in grave danger of being sucked into this mini black hole. It had arrived a few days earlier and, in all honesty, it didn't look too promising. It was by a band called Telsa – or was it Telstar? Tesla even – and the note with it was simple: new group, new album, whaddaya think? I spun it . . . and was decidedly impressed!

BRIAN 'SHREDDED' WHEAT: *no longer a three-a-day man*

Nerve ends suitably tingled by this new discovery, I was anxious to find out more; the record company could tell me little but Metallica drummer Lars Ulrich could.

"Tesla? Sure, I've heard the tape. They're managed by Peter and Cliff, I thought you *knew* that . . . good album too!"

Lars to the rescue. The Peter and Cliff in question are, of course, Mensch and Bernstein (aka. Q Prime Inc.), the management team behind Def Leppard, Dokken and Metallica. I knew what lay in store . . .

"Bonutto?"

Yes.

"Mensch here. Did you get the tape of the Tesla album?"

Yes.

"Well, isn't it about time you did something on the band?"

Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Indeed. I took down band bass player Brian Wheat's Sacramento number and agreed to call at a specified time.

"You *will* make this call, won't you?" pressed the Transatlantic one. "I mean, these guys put a lot of store by *Kerrang!*, it's a big deal for them, don't let them down."

Clearly, this was a major responsibility. I *had* to make the call and I could *not* be late, the good name of *Kerrang!* was at stake. Correct to the absolute second, I punched out the number on the office hot-line, expecting the voice at the other end to be fresh, expectant and raring to rap. This was *Kerrang!* after all. A 'big deal', right? I was on my best behaviour . . .

Brian Wheat, it must be said, turned out to be a real nice guy. He also turned out to be in bed. Still, he had just lost 60 pounds in weight, jogging and fasting the fat into oblivion, so maybe the strain was beginning to take its toll. Whatever, he roused himself sufficiently to hit me with some fax, and it soon became clear that Tesla – previously known as City Kid – weren't always the power-packed outfit they are today. Oh no. In fact, when Elektra Records' A&R man Tom Zutaut first saw them they were pretty heavily into tightly structured pop/rock, one eye on the charts and the other . . . on the charts as well!

"Tom said we needed to write more from the gut," says Brian, "quit chasing after the three-minute hit single. But the thing is, we were involved with a producer called Duane Hitchings who was telling us to write like that and our previous manager, Steve Clausman, thought we should too."

Which just goes to show that sometimes you need to follow your instincts and ignore the advice of others. After all, if Zutaut hadn't stuck with his own judgement he'd probably never had signed Mötley Crüe to Elektra . . .

"When I saw them live," says Tom, "they had all the makings of a great hard rock band, with one of the best singers I'd ever heard! The only trouble was their songs were too wimpy and they tended to write in a formularised way. They just weren't writing from the heart."

Still, Tom felt the potential was there and in the Summer of '84 he decided it was time to talk business with the boys, proposition them if you will. If they could offer him some good original hard rock songs he could offer them a deal. Straightforward and simple, and six weeks later the results arrived in the post; a tape of a new number, 'Ez Come Ez Go' (now the first track on the album), that had the A&R man bubbling over with superlatives.

"I went to see their live show again but they'd re-arranged the song and it was *terrible!* I complained to the guys that they'd wimped out," and this complaining clearly did the trick with the band deciding there and then (October '84) to follow their natural instincts and forget the rest. Needless to say, this was music to the Zutaut ears and, in January '85, having transferred to the A&R dept. at Geffen Records, they become his first signing to that label, still called City Kid, but ready to develop in both direction and name . . .

FORMED BY Wheat and guitarist Frank Hannon, the band has been together since 1982, opening up for the likes of Y&T, Eddie Money, Rail and Dokken as well as playing headline shows of their own. The other members of the band are Jeff Keith (vocals), Tommy Skeoch (guitar) and Troy Luccketta. With the exception of Luccketta, once a member of the Eric Martin Band, none of the outfit have any real background in the biz, though it's interesting to note that back in pre-Luccketta days they spent a few months on Guam in the North Pacific entertaining US troops and tropical islanders alike.

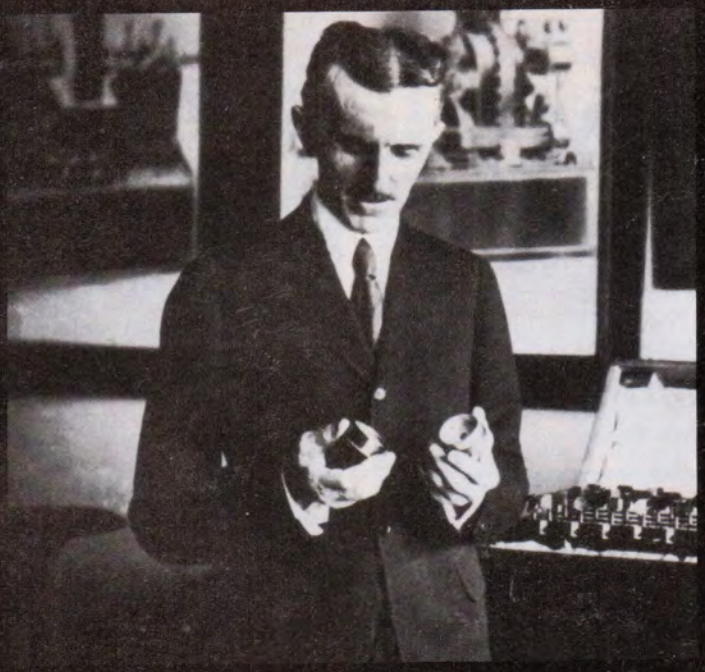
In other words, they knew how to connect with an audience live, a quality that impressed both Mensch and Bernstein when in the Summer of '85 they found themselves chez Zutaut watching a one-camera video shoot of City Kid in performance. Tom had mentioned the band before to limited response, but the video clearly did the trick and it wasn't long before Bernstein was flanking the eager A&R'er at a Sacramento show. He

wasn't disappointed. The band, he felt, had half a great album already in their grasp and if they could come up with the other half then *he* was their man. By the Autumn of '85 a *wholly* great album had been written and what was needed now was the right producer to pull it together . . . the search was on.

Between December '85 and April '86 a number of different producers were approached, names like Max Norman, Peter Collins, Chas Sanford and others, and while all were keen to get involved with the project none were prepared to commit themselves fully in terms of time and place. A frustrating period, but the band just kept on writing and playing, the Oasis Ballroom in Sacramento being their local haunt, patiently waiting to get into the studio – *any* studio!

Meantime, Zutaut took a plane East to meet up with Steve Thompson and Michael Barbiero, undisputed remix kings of the New York area. He played them a tape of a group he wanted them to work with, but the pair just weren't keen; nah, it was too lightweight, too poppy by half, they were after something with some *meat* to it. Really? How interesting . . . Zutaut produced the City Kid tape he just happened to have about his person and the rest, as they say . . .

Thompson and Barbiero went on to produce the album at



NIKOLA TESLA: inventor of the egg cup?

Bearsville Studios, NY State, Mensch and Bernstein took the troupe under their collective wing, coming up with the name Tesla in the process, and the end result, the 'Mechanical Resonance' LP, certainly makes this story with a happy ending; vinyl proof of a band who are willing to experiment and unwilling to be placed in any convenient category. Says Brian:

"We want to be diverse, we don't want to be one-dimensional. A lot of rock bands all sound the same, but we want to be more like Queen, Led Zeppelin and Bad Company than Ratt or WASP.

"We wanted to try and capture a mid-Seventies sound on this album; today every record is full of drum machines but we just wanted to present the performance of the band – so many records now don't reflect the people who play on them."

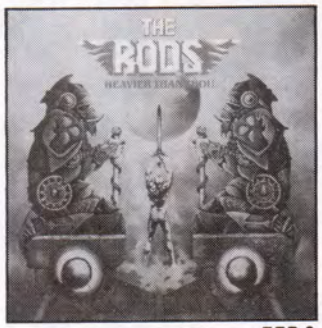
In this repect, Thompson & Barbiero definitely qualify for a lengthy bow, helping to craft an album that has all the potential to tip the platinum scales. This isn't a group on the 'spandex 'n' sequins' side of rock, this is a down-to-earth-jeans-and-T-shirts-rock 'n' roll-band in the classic mould; they've now shot a video for 'Modern Day Cowboy', a song about terrorism apparently that's currently picking up a good deal of Stateside airplay, and with the DLR tour stretching out before them should be well placed to put the name of Tesla squarely on the map. Another track from the LP, 'Little Suzi', will be released as a single in the UK in March.

And as for Nikola Tesla, well, the day after he died of an alleged heart attack all his papers suddenly disappeared leading to speculation that the US Govt. might have bumped him off. Five years later fuel was added to the fire when these papers – dealing remember with how the world could be split apart of the seams – turned up in US Govt. possession. To this day, even with America's access of information laws, most of them remain Top Secret. Mysterious indeed.

Somehow I doubt whether Tesla the *band* can be kept under similar wraps.

THE RODS

HEAVIER THAN THOU



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WHEW! FROM THE BRAIN!

■ THERE'S JUST no stopping those tearaway Metal rappers the **Beastie Boys**. Not content with storming the US charts thanks to their **'Licensed To Ill'** LP, the daredevil trio recently made an appearance on **Joan Rivers'** oh-so-swanky late night chat show in Los Angeles.

But for once these New York monsters met their match. Auntie Joanie introduced the Beastie Boys by stating that they'd just put out an album called **'Licensed To Kill'** and when corrected in classic Beasties fashion by the 'diplomats' in da band she retorted: "Well, if you *had* called the record 'Licensed To Kill' you'd have probably sold twice as many copies!" Neither **'Krusher' Joule** nor **'Hip-Hop' Barton** were said to be impressed by this suggestion.

■ SO, WHAT gives with **Whitesnake**? Latest rumours suggest that the long-awaited new album should be with us by the end of March . . . and then p'raps we'll have a tour, eh? Except that there are conflicting stories over the musicians who will hit the road as the Whitesnake collective. It has been suggested that lead vocalist **David Coverdale** is heartily fed up with guitarist **John Sykes'** ego and wants to sack 'im, whilst it is counter-claimed that Sykes wants Coverdale out! As if all this wasn't enuff, there are further tit-bits floating around to the tune that bassist **Neil Murray** and drummer **Aynsley Dunbar** might well be all washed-up on the 'Snake front, with **Rudy Sarzo** and **Tommy Aldridge** being hired in their stead. Golly gosh, how much *more* ridiculous can these stories get?!

KOMIK KORNER

"A MAN walks into a pub with his dog and orders a drink. He sits in a corner and then starts to tell people that his mutt is unique: the only talking dog in the world. No-one believes him and the landlord says, 'Look I'll bet you a fiver that he can't say a word'.

"The owner agrees to the bet and says to the dog, 'C'mon boy, show this jerk what an intelligent dog you are'. But the dog just sits there, looking up dumbly at his master. Eventually, the man has to concede defeat, hands over his fiver and walks out of the pub with the dog, very dejected.

"When they get outside, he turns to the dog and shouts, 'Why the hell did you embarrass me like that? On top, you cost me a fiver!'

"The dog simply winks and replies, 'Listen that was a good business move. Think how much the landlord will bet you next week. We can clean up!' – ***Tom Araya (Slayer).***

***CYNDI LAUPER** is seen above setting new standards for 1987's Ladykillers contenders. All hopefuls PLEEZE note!*

***MÖTLEY CRÖW**'s guitarist **Mick Mars** is seen here surreptitiously paying his plastic surgeon lots of dosh for a recent secret operation. Mind you, if he took a look in a mirror he'd see that said medic has succeeded only in making him look suspiciously like the **Pretenders' Chrissie Hynde**.*

SHAKE, WRESTLE & ROLL!

YIPES! NOW we at VFTB are well into dirty rock 'n' roll, but this is taking things too far! Seattle's finest (or nearly, anyway) ***Metal Church*** *recently got into training for their current European tour with* ***Metallica*** *by sending bassist* ***Duke Erickson*** *(a former Washington state high school champion wrestler) into the ring at Hollywood's Tropicana to take on the club's best female wrestler, who apparently was trained by none other than* ***Mütley Cröw's Vince Neil****! But trained in what exactly, may we ask?!*

HERE WE see ***Erickson*** *(on the extreme left) discussing the rules and regulations of the contest with both his opponent (guess which one she is), and assorted members of the Church.*

DUKE *AND his opponent get well oiled before getting close in the clinches. Please note the quick change in hair colour by the femme since the previous shot. Obviously a gamesmanship ploy!*

FIRST, A quick getting-to-know-you session on the mat before the serious squelchy mud-slinging begins. If only UK Saturday afternoon TV wrestling could be like this!

AHEM, WE dare not suggest what's occurring here! A shot taken from the opposite side of the wrestling mat might have provided a more graphic idea of the exercise in action.

■ A RECENT story in the *Mail On Sunday's Biz* supplement reported **Mick Jagger** encountering **Def Leppard** in an Amsterdam studio. Said Mick: "I recorded an album, mixed it and had two children in the time it took 'em to lay down a single backing track!" (And then they scrapped it . . .)

"Bollocks! Megadeth kick a billion tons of crap out of Cryptic Slaughter any day!"

FAMINE FORTUNE

■ *WHEN LA maniacs* ***Rough Cutt*** *recently played a show at the Country Club, they hauled a number of major (and not so major) rockers onstage for a performance of the* ***Hear n' Aid*** *famine relief song* ***'Stars'****. Naturally, a snapper was on hand to capture the Metallic entourage backstage after the show.*

Pictured here are members of the Cutt with ***Jeff LaBar*** *and* ***Eric Brittingham (Cinderella)****, the entire* ***Dio*** *band,* ***Vince Neil (Mötley Crüe), Frankie Banali, Carlos Cavazo*** *and* ***Chuck Wright (Quiet Riot), David Glen Eisley*** *and* ***Alan Krigger (Giuffria), Jay Reynolds*** *and* ***Mick Zane (Malice),*** *play various personages gathered from* ***Alcatrazz*** *and* ***Fanz****.*

Who's who? C'mon, we're not gonna do all the work for ya!

MANOWAR : THE

ON FEBRUARY 23, 1987 Manowar will release their fifth studio album, 'Fighting The World', on the Atlantic/Atco label. Some said it would never happen; when the band parted company with 10 Records – one of *six* different labels they've been involved with over a four year period – there were those who unashamedly rubbed their hands in glee, confidently predicting that the New York outfit, the carpet pulled from under them, would never hold their ground on the slippery parquet slope. Oh no? Bitter words are always the hardest to swallow, so keep an eye out for some suitably sour expressions. The people behind 'em are the ones who got it all wrong . . . *again!*

As I say, 'Fighting The World' will be with us shortly, and though the finished package bears certain traces of the band's previous label leapfrog (best not gone into here), I can still recommend it to anyone with a taste for the Big Bang. 'Blow Your Speakers' (a possible single), 'Carry On', 'Holy War', 'Blackwind, Fire And Steel' . . . no corner has been cut or knob left unturned in an effort to produce what Manowar bassist Joey De Maio hopes will be regarded as a "landmark", and a digitally recorded one at that!

Time (three months to record and mix), the right studio and the right people has resulted in a record guaranteed to frighten the cat, sabre-toothed or otherwise! The songs are good, commercial an' crunchy as always, with the Orson Welles-narrated 'Defender' rearing its head on album for the first time (it was previously released as a 12" single on the Music For Nations label back in '84), and the sound . . . well, now you're talking about a labour of love, a sacred God-given mission to do ultimate justice to the pin-drop power of the band's live attack.

Guitarist Vinnie Vincent claims to sleep with his hot pink Charvel and Manowar enjoy similar 'relations' with their equipment (which I guess gives a whole new meaning to the term 'humping gear'!); they've got 100 bass speakers, seven modified Marshall heads, 12 Marshall cabs (minus FX) and a stainless steel custom-made drumkit with computer interface facilities and all types of memory and storage. And, believe me, they're gonna use 'em!

"Small gear sounds small, big gear sounds big," says Joey, a man with 10,000 watts at his fingertips, "it's as simple as that . . ."

FOLLOWING THEIR split with 10 Records, who Joey feels don't fully understand HM or the work involved in breaking a band of this nature, Manowar (completed by Ross The Boss on guitar, Eric Adams on vocals and Scott Columbus on drums) decided to keep a low profile, still writing, still rehearsing, still playing as always, but steering clear of the press until they had something positive to say, some new step forward to announce.

They packed out shows in the New York area and visited Europe with Motörhead last Easter (the 'Easter Metal Blast' taking them to Germany, Switzerland, Denmark, Holland and Belgium, the first time they'd supported anyone since an ill-fated handful of shows with Ted Nugent way back in '82), throwing in a couple of headline appearances along the way. WEA International came to see them 'fire up' and were mightily impressed, as indeed was Jason Flom, an A&R man at Atlantic Records NY. He liked the songs and he liked the band live, even going upstate to Valhalla (aka the band's rehearsal hall!) to watch them run through some fresh – as opposed to Frash – material.

Plus, the new Mannish demos were far from throwaway ear candy: 'Number One', 'Brothers Of Metal', the rousing anthem 'Courage' . . . they were hotter than a 'Fisherman's Friend' and just as likely to steam up the portholes. Interest peaked. Flom put the band together with veteran producer Eddie Kramer (Kiss, Fastway, Raven, Anthrax, etc) at Bearsville Studios, Woodstock, to see if there was more where those came from, the result being 'Blow Your Speakers' and 'Carry On' . . . not forgetting, of course, the all-important deal with Atlantic. The show, as they say, was back on the road . . .

Certainly, the two Kramer-backed numbers were good enough to get the band signed, but, well, Manowar were after something more; they wanted it louder, heavier, meaner, the usual deal, and set about achieving that end with the good folk at Atlantic (who *do* understand Metal) giving them a free hand to do what needed to be done – no producer forced upon them, no cover versions 'suggested', no wimp-out, no way . . .

Universal Studios, Chicago, was the site chosen to record, the band wanting to be close (both spiritually and geographically) to one Vince Gutman, the brains behind the M.A.R.C company and the man responsible for Scott's computer-linked kit. Actually, he happened to be one of only seven people at the band's first ever gig in Chicago, a genuine fan only too happy to add his weight (not to mention his 'Drums Of Death' system) to The Cause. Add the skills of engineer Richard Breen and the combined input of the band and you have . . . 'Fighting The World', splendidly conceived right down to the artwork for the

FIGHT GOES ON

sleeve which you see laid out before you; very 'Destroyer', very 'Love Gun', but then that's hardly surprising as Ken Kelly, the artist in question here, was also responsible for those two Kiss kovers, along with Rainbow's 'Rising' and a whole host of book jackets. He doesn't come cheap but when he does come the Earth most *definitely* moves . . .

TO BACK up the release of 'FTW' Manowar and their famed Soldiers Of Death roadcrew plan to take to the road around April, starting in Europe, then crossing over to the UK before heading back to the United States and Canada, a complete world tour in fact keeping them busy until the following December. As of May, they'll be available to support in the US but it remains to be seen just how many headline acts are prepared to place a loaded gun to their temples.

Either way, though, support or headline, the band just want to *play*, to be given the chance to unveil their *real* Metal stageshow (backline 'n' brawn), their new costumes, their treasured gear (idling at 120-130 decibels, hitting 160 on the spikes) . . . a new beginning, but with the past still playing a part in the shape of such first-album songs as 'Metal Daze', 'Battle Hymns' and 'Shellshock', the latter recently introduced to the set. Who knows, there might even be a video (a mini epic, of course!).

Manowar; Errol Flynn is their mentor and they will not be moved. Honest.

DANTE BONUTTO

Pic Nigel Seek

WHITE KNIGHTS

DEREK OLIVER takes WHITE TIGER (pictured above) by the tail and proclaims: 'This is the best Heavy Metal band in Los Angeles looking for a future right now'. Band vocalist DAVID DONATO (second left – ex-Sabbath) and guitarist MARK ST. JOHN (second right – ex-Kiss) ain't arguing. . .

IT'S GETTING very confusing, if you ask me. Lemme see now . . . there's White Lion, White Sister, Great White, Glass Tiger, White Wolf and Whitesnake . . . and, yup, you've guessed it, yet another addition to this ever-expanding bunch, the very latest in fact; a band by the monicker of, wait for it . . . *White Tiger!*

No-nonsense rockers whose riffs and macho strut are the epitome of modern US Metal; bombastic yet well crafted, the sort of stuff that Ratt handed to us on their first mini-album. Not too dissimilar, in fact, to the archetypal anthems of Dio circa their 'Holy Diver' LP . . . a raw, exciting, ambitious sound that even brings to mind Queensrÿche's continuous barrage of non-mainstream guitar salvos. Mind you, the production and mixing of the band's self-titled album (reviewed issue 136) is so naff that at times it tends to obscure the fact that White Tiger are something very special indeed.

A damn good outfit alright, one that will improve with the passing of time and, more importantly, with the injection of sizeable amounts of cash – something that in the long run only a deal with a major label can provide, should they want one of course. And do they?

"Oh sure, that's the foremost objective in our plan of attack. Right now we've got a showcase concert coming up at the Country Club (in Los Angeles); it's our first gig and a lot of record company people are coming down to check out the situation . . . Hopefully, in general terms, we'll impress them enough to get a deal out of it.

"Looking at it objectively, I think we've got great potential; strong songs, great musicianship, a good image, serious long-term plans, and we're all fed up sitting on the sidelines . . . we want a slice of the action and we want it *now!*"

This is vocalist David Donato speaking, one half of the second most delicious partnership of all time (the first, in case you need to know, was Jimmy Page and Robert Plant). His other half is guitarist Mark St. John and together they form the inner sanctum of White Tiger, a four-piece band (the other members are bassist Michael Norton and drummer Brian James Fox) who offer something substantial and dependable in every area I can think of.

Not just a mangled Metal outfit with little idea or style, this new crew merges depth an' detail with big heady blasts of power and just a tiny touch of sassy sophistication and are the best Heavy Metal band in Los Angeles looking for a future right now and anyone who thinks otherwise might care to crawl inside a microwave oven, close the door and fry!

INDIVIDUALLY, WHITE Tiger already have a creditable and fairly remarkable history tucked behind their ears, yet instead of whingeing about chronic bad luck they seem keen to get on with the perfectly positive task of proving just how sound this particular band happens to be. Not that they suffer from total amnesia . . . and in any case, it's journalists like myself who help to remind them. . .

First under the microscope, then, is David Donato. He's the vocalist, you might recall, selected from a stack of young hopefuls (and some not so young; UFO's Phil Mogg was actually approached at one stage!) by Brummie bad boys Black Sabbath to fill Ian Gillan's empty shoes. As it turned out, however, this teaming, seemingly made in heaven (or perhaps that should read hell!), lasted only a few weeks, ending rather abruptly. . .

"Oh, I got along great with Bill (Ward) and Geezer (Butler)," reckons David, choosing his words very carefully. "It was fine on a social level but they seemed to be having great difficulty writing new songs. I wanted to make a greater musical contribution, but being the new boy it was very difficult. I was in a weird position; I didn't want to come across as a big shot yet I had to make some kind of input or things would've completely stagnated.

"Anyway, they brought in Bob Ezrin (the well known producer) after just three songs had been finished . . . and that's when I got a telephone call from Sabbath's management telling me that it was over."

Donato's immediate reaction was to call the band for an explanation. He got through to Bill and Geezer, no problem, both of whom claimed complete ignorance; he couldn't, however, reach guitarist Tony Iommi or indeed get his calls returned. . .

Are you bitter about what went on?

"I was *frustrated*, that's for sure," replies the singer forcefully. "Actually, the one thing I *do* know is that they didn't fire me because of my voice . . . it appears to have been more of an attitude problem. Yet Tony has never clarified or spoken to me about it. I still get Christmas cards from Bill, though!"

Originally a drummer and then – believe it or not – a male model (!), David's first step into the music business came during the mid-Seventies when he joined English rockers Armageddon (based in Los Angeles) after the much publicised tragic death of their original leader/vocalist Keith Relf; up until then they had recorded just one album for A&M Records and, unfortunately for David, shortly after he joined they split for good.

Later, following a short modelling stint, he was asked to front West Coast band Hero, a group who'd put out two albums on the 20th Century Records label with little success. Despite having the support of then Sammy Hagar manager Ed Leffler, Hero soon ground to a halt, confused with their musical direction, leaving David once again unemployed and back on the streets.

Out of luck he may have been but lazy he most definitely wasn't. Hanging out with a variety of small bands, none to his liking, he hit upon the notion of forming his own group, surrounding himself with able musicians and forming, as it later turned out, an embryonic version of White Tiger. First in, apart from a part-time drummer (one J R Symes!), was (surprisingly) that great British Mars Bar nosher Glenn Hughes, followed swiftly by guitar ace Mark Norton!

Ironically, after just months, virtually everyone in the band had moved on to bigger and better things; Hughes, of course, formed the Hughes/Thrall band with Pat Thrall, Donato teamed up with Black Sabbath and Mark Norton absconded to Kiss, albeit under the name of Mark St. John (for glam appeal apparently!).

MARK, BORN 'n' raised in California, took up guitar at an early age, learning to play in a variety of styles from country through to punk and rock through to disco. In fact, it was his ability to switch styles so easily that got him gigs at such diverse places as Aladdin's Gambling Casino in Las Vegas, the National Theatre in Memphis (a Country & Western stronghold) and a string of infamous punk clubs dotted around the West Coast!

As a naturally talented guitarist with a deft left hand (his style often reminds me of a modern day Tommy Bolin), his next move was no real surprise; he accepted a teaching residency in one of Los Angeles' many guitar schools. In the meantime, of course, he was involved in various side projects one of them being White Tiger . . . a project interrupted by a telephone call from Kiss' management office.

Apparently, Grover Jackson (he of the famous brand of guitars) had sent Kiss frontman Paul Stanley some tapes of the hottest guitarists around as potential replacements for the departed Vinnie Vincent. One of the tapes featured Norton – and that was the one that Paul Stanley and bassist Gene Simmons liked best! Kiss flew Mark to New York, rehearsed with him and then went into Right Track Studios in Manhattan to record 'Animalize', one of their best albums of the last few years.

For Mark, though, things were to go badly wrong, for on the eve of a European tour he contracted a rare disease called Reiters Syndrome – a form of arthritis causing, amongst other symptoms, his left (playing) hand to swell making it virtually impossible for him to (ahem) handle his instrument. The advice from his team of doctors was to take six months complete rest . . . and familiarise himself with a wheelchair! A bitter blow that first cost him the European tour (Bruce Kulick was drafted in as a temporary replacement), then the ensuing American dates (actually, he managed to play four or five East Coast shows) and, eventually, as the disease took a firm hold, his permanent position in the band.

"It was simple," he told me. "One night I went to bed in a big hotel feeling quite well, everyone was friendly and it was all smiles. When I woke up the next morning they were gone and a limousine was waiting outside to take me to a plane . . . then I flew home!"

His condition took a considerable time to completely heal but since then he's had no trouble whatsoever, thank heavens.

THE CURRENT version of White Tiger was formed some 18 months ago; Mark and David spent several months writing and rehearsing before getting down to selecting the other members. First to be appointed was bass man Michael Norton (yes, he *is* Mark's brother but that, apparently, had absolutely no bearing on matters whatsoever!), who had just quit now defunct Los Angeles band Driver. He was followed by drumbeater Brian James Fox, a man stolen from an outfit called Pocket Full.

"He's like Tommy Lee but *wilder!*" reckons Donato.

And the plan? Well, they could've walked the boards like thousands of other groups, getting a reputation of sorts but, no . . . sensibly, they decided to hold back, rehearse, get financial backing, negotiate temporary management and then, when the time was absolutely right, go into the studio and cut an album, the one you should be listening to right now.

A problem. Despite White Tiger's 50,000 dollar recording investment the album, to my mind, suffers from poor sound quality. The fault, according to Mark, lies in the final mix, a problem that could be overcome if more cash were available for re-mixing.

And the future?

"The one thing we'd love to do," says David, "is pull off a major stage production. We've got some fantastic ideas like bringing a real White Tiger on stage and having a gigantic tiger's head built as a drum riser . . . lots of things if, of course, we get the backing."

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The Seven Keys Of Hell...

HELLOWEEN that is, the German pumpkin-powered outfit whose brand of 'Turbo Charged Operatik Speedhem' can drive a man to drink. XAVIER RUSSELL, on location in Hannover for a blast of the band's new LP, needs little encouragement . . .

I DO love winding people up, which could explain why I make regular trips to Shades Records. My victim? Why, Master Constable (aka Igor), of course. Now Dave recently told me that he knew someone in Switzerland who'd heard the latest Helloween offering 'Keeper Of The Seven Keys – Part 1', and according to them it was a total wimp-out, filled with keyboards; the sorta thing Derek Oliver might have a 'J. Arfur' over! Naturally, I was worried. How could Helloween let me down like this? Surely it couldn't be true! There was only one way to find out: go across to Hannover in Germany and listen to the album for myself . . .

So here I am gagged and bound with the Lad Cronin on Lufthansa's 049 early morning Hangover (geddit?) flight. Cronin is in high spirits, and why shouldn't he be? He's just bought a new flash unit for his ever-reliable Brownie 127 and doesn't seem to share my worries about the wimp out of the century.

On our arrival in freezing Hannover we're greeted by Hans 'eight cups of coffee and a packet of Camels, please' Bruns, Noise Records' (de)press(ed) officer who, like us, is eager to get an earful of da new 'Ween opus. So, armed with a pair of snowshoes we seek out, no, not the lager of Lamot, but Horus Sound Studios. We get there and find not a dicky bird (he was probably in Australia watching England roast da Aussies!) *(I feel I should point out that this is a very obscure cricketing pun, 'Dicky' Bird being an umpire. Now read on – Ed).* Kai Hansen (vrrr, grrr) and Michael Weikath (grrr) are still in the land of Nodsville – *grrreeeaaattt!* So we're like turning into snowmen and as usual Cronin starts moaning. And believe you me, there's nothing worse than getting an earful of the Krone in full cry. However, just as the man is becoming unbearable the welcoming figure of producer Tommy Hansen arrives to let us in. Now Tommy's got quite a track record and is fast becoming one of Metal's (both Frash and HM) hottest properties.

Tommy is keen to get the master tapes spinning, so once we've been joined by the aforementioned Weikath and Hansen we're off . . . OUCH! My battered old 'King Lears' are having trouble absorbing the powerchords that are literally jumping out of the speakers and grabbing me by the throat, and even the normally non-plussed Cronin is tapping his 'plates of meat' in total amazement, being heard to utter: "This is certainly a refreshing change from rubbish like Europe!" The man certainly has a point there and I begin to realise that Master Constable has gotten his sweet revenge, winding *me* up for a change! If there *are* keyboards on this album, I can't hear 'em!

"What's this one called, Kai, it's MIND BLOWING?!"

Kai, looking well pleased with himself, proudly announces: "Oh, this one's 'Hallowe'en' with an 'a', our 13 minute 22 second mini opera! It's all about Hallowe'en and how some guy is sitting in his room when he's confronted by good and bad and has to decide what he wants to do: he decides to go with the good and be the saviour of mankind and this is where the Seven Keys come into the story, but I don't want to give too much away because the ending will be on 'Keeper Of The Seven Keys – Part 2' which we plan to record later in the year."

Pic Peter Cronin

HELLOWEEN'S KAI HANSEN and MICHAEL WEIKATH: guess who's got the Seven Keys Of Hell?

'HALLOWE'EN' (WITH an 'a') has to be heard to be believed, it's simply breathtaking; forget the term 'Techno Mosh' cos 'POWER OPERATIK INTRIKATE METAL' has arrived. This song has more time changes than British Rail and that's saying summink, innit? New singer Michael Kiske really has added a whole new dimension to the Helloween sound. His arrival has certainly breathed new life into Helloween, Kai Hansen now having more freedom on the guitar; certainly his interchanges with Michael Weikath are far more menacing on '. . . Seven Keys' than they were on the previous 'Walls Of Jericho' LP.

13 minutes and 22 seconds later 'Hallowe'en' comes to a climactic end; Weikath was right when he said: "There's a ghost in the machine in this studio". It was frightening, and I look around to see the reaction of my colleagues. Well, Cronin has taken up smoking yet again and Hans' glasses have steamed up; and as for yours truly, well, I've got through a six-pack of German Pilsner! How *can* they follow that? I think . . . Easy! With a Michael Kiske original 'A Little Time'; you've just gotta hear the continuous chunky riff that holds the song together – commercial, yet at the same time very eccentric, especially the middle section of the toon where Weikath lets loose with one of the most outrageous geetar solos I've every heard, making Yngwie J. Snoozesteen seem very ordinary in comparison. Then, just when you think the song can't get any weirder, off go a host of alarm clocks! Triffik stuff! Another 'time out', as they say in American footy, is called by your very own Bourbon Baron, giving me the chance to gather my thoughts.

"Have you got any Speed Metal songs you can play me?" I ask sarcastically.

Michael looks at me angrily: "You know I hate that term!

There *are* some fast songs on the album, but please don't refer to 'em as Speed Metal songs – anything but that! please!"

"How about TURBO CHARGED OPERATIK SPEEDHEM?"

Kai: "Yeah, I like that, but I think some of the Speed Metal fans might have difficulty understanding that term. Let me play you the two 'Turbo Charged' songs that will appear on '. . . Seven Keys': 'I'm Alive', which is preceded by the album's intro piece, and 'Twilight'. We'd love to play you the rest but we can't because it hasn't been mixed down yet!"

ONCE AGAIN the 'ghost in the machine' goes into overdrive as the Wagnerian intro fills the studio – very classical and very Helloween, as is the speed of 'I'm Alive'. Much as Messrs Weikath and Hansen hate the term 'Speed Metal' there's no denying that this is a VERY FAST toon, the only offering on '. . . Seven Keys' that coulda come from 'Walls Of Jericho', the sole difference being the improvement in the production – very Rick Rubin. The sneak preview sadly comes to a close with the aforementioned 'Twilight', another exhausting fast 'un and what a scorcher! But why has '. . . Seven Keys' been split into two parts?

Michael Weikath: "We originally wanted to do a double album but that was not allowed by Noise, our record company, who said there were some songs they didn't like and that it would be too expensive and risky to put out a double album. In a way I'm glad it's coming out in two parts because we've simply run out of studio time.

"Our European tour starts in March. There's talk of Overkill (from the US East Coast) and Satan (from Newcastle) supporting us, but nothing has been confirmed as yet. I *can* reveal, however, that we'll be putting on a way-out stage show with a big pumpkin, but that's all I'm going to say!"

Talking of pumpkins, I was very upset to read on the back of your recently-released 'Judas' EP that 'Fangface' is no longer with you; what happened to him?

Weikath again: "'Fangface', or the 'Pumpkin Man' as you like to call him, has been locked up in a cage and we had to make this album so we could get enough money together to feed him! He was fun while he lasted and now we're using the pumpkin theme a lot more. You'll see on the inner sleeve of '. . . Seven Keys' that we've devoted a comic strip to the pumpkin!"

And on that note my tape ran out. We last saw Michael Weikath heading towards the local sex shop, obviously in search of inspiration for '. . . Seven Keys – Part 2'. 'Part 1', meanwhile, is due out in early February – buy or die!

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KILLER WATT

RICK 'Mad Max' PIERCE of Q5 armed an' ready with the Aria 'Road Warrior': 'a stylish instrument, well constructed and finished in all respects'

Pic Ray Palmer

STREET LETHAL

ARIA 'ROAD WARRIOR'
RRP £549

THERE'S SOMETHING about the 'Road Warrior' that gives it quite a professional look. I can't pin it down to any one specific item, but overall the appearance has a certain class about it.

It doesn't have the wildest body-shape in the guitar world, sticking instead to the now classic lines of the Strat, with the comfortable body contouring and balance that this shape affords. When you then finish it off with a coat of luxurious 'midnight blue' gloss, it starts to look a bit stylish.

The neck, too, is of fairly standard dimensions and contour. It's unpainted on the back, which leaves it very smooth, and has a good overall feel. A bolt-on job with the standard 22 medium guage frets and small dot-inlays, it features a very nicely finished rosewood fingerboard.

Electrics on the '. . . Warrior' comprise of two twin-coil pick-ups, a 3-position selector and volume and one tone control, the latter having a 'pull' facility to put both pick-ups in single coil mode. The jack socket is mounted on the edge – out of sight and out of the way.

Ho-hum; here I go again, moaning about the controls. Both volume and tone knobs give very little response in the middle section of their rotation. The volume pot provides a hefty boost just as it reaches full-on, while the tone pot only gives any real change when its rotation reaches full bass (fully anti-clockwise). Other than that they're both fairly ineffective. (But aren't most guitars' controls like this these days?).

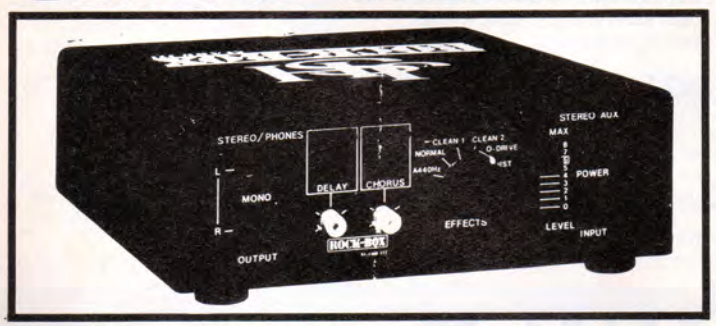
Using both pick-ups together, the '. . . Warrior' is capable of a pretty good, quite beefy sound – with a well-honed cutting edge if the coil-tap is brought into play – even through a cheap combo amp. Use a decent amplification set-up and it starts to sound very good. On their own, however, the individual pick-ups are a bit disappointing for some reason – the neck p/u perhaps too 'middle' weighted, the bridge p/u a bit thin and abrasive, something accentuated when in single-coil mode. (The 'thin and abrasive' sound is, however, a popular one amongst Metal musos.)

The remaining piece of hardware is the tremolo/bridge assembly, which is a Kahler 'Flyer'. Although the Flyer is an excellent piece of machinery, I did find this one to have been set very stiff compared to what they usually feel like; also, the trem. arm was a little too high above the strings for my taste, with not enough range – less than a semitone – on the pitch increase side. Each to his own, and some adjustment could easily tailor these things to your requirements.

Overall, the 'Road Warrior' is a stylish instrument, well constructed and finished in all respects, but perhaps lacking the variation in sound that you might expect for the price, to which the fitting of a Kahler is an obvious contributing factor.

(Enquiries: **Gigsville – Tel. 01 847 5595**) PAUL HENDERSON

SMALL WONDER



JHS 'ROCK BOX Mk III'
RRP £159

FOR HOME practice there's nothing to beat one of these tiny practice amps. Much easier and more convenient than plugging into an amp/speaker cab. set-up or a combo, with effects pedals and leads strewn about the floor, they are extremely useful little items to have around.

The JHS 'Rock Box' is one of the better ones that I've come across, housed in a tough metal case with a good complement of facilities and a good sound via a lightweight yet robust pair of headphones.

The front panel has two input sockets, headphones and mono outputs, a slider for level adjustment, delay and chorus buttons, rate and amount controls for those two respectively, and a rotary selector offering five different sounds – normal, clean 1 and 2, overdrive and distortion – along with an A-440Hz tuning tone. Down one side there are also 'gain' and 'compression' rotary controls, send and return sockets – to enable connection of other effects, for example – and a footswitch socket, although the footswitch isn't supplied with the unit. All inputs and outputs are standard ¼" jack and the unit can be powered by batteries (eight HP7 types) or mains adaptor (not supplied).

Of the five sound options, the 'clean 1' and 'clean 2' are particularly good, giving a very reasonable sound, a fine 'attack' and a fair amount of sustain. The overdrive sound is acceptably 'dirty', whilst the distortion setting is of a three-fuzz-boxes-in-series level of 'filth'.

For what they are the chorus and delay effects are actually quite good, not as 'noisy' as those on many other units of this nature. However, with just one variable parameter apiece they obviously lack the sophistication and degree of control of separate, specific effects, and shouldn't really be thought of as a substitute for those in your live set-up.

The 'Rock Box Mk III' isn't the cheapest practice amp on the market, but the quality of its sound makes it more desirable than several other models, and the tough construction means that it could well outlast a couple of the cheaper ones.

PAUL HENDERSON

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SHORT SHORT

reviewed by PAUL 'INTERESTING' HENDERSON

BOSTON: 'Amanda' (MCA)
How Boston retain the descriptive term '*rock* band' with stuff like this, currently being 're-activated', is an indication of just how many bands survive on past reputations. In all *honesty*, there's more bollocks in a Barry Manilow ditty than in this sickly, sentimental crooner.

An ex-Number One in the US, which could prompt a vicious attack on that country's musical taste were it not for the fact that *we* recently had Chris de Burgh's 'The Lady In Red' in the top slot. Don't buy it. I *beg* you.

THE DAMNED: 'Gigolo' (MCA)
Quite bizarre, in a way, reminding me all at the same time of such unlikelies as the Byrds, the Monkees and the Tremeloes, with a faint topping of that Sixties 'poppy' quasi-psychedelia – an effect accentuated by the record being warped and the stylus going up and down like a whore's tights. Possibly interesting, possibly dreadful. Definitely weird, definitely brave!

EUROPE: 'Rock The Night' (Epic)
Not the most original title for not the most original song. Where its predecessor 'The Final Countdown' had such a strong hook in the keyboard line to grab your attention, 'Rock The Night' has nothing as strong to make it a contender for singles success. The band's dilemma is that this track is tame enough to make it the choice for the follow-up single, yet it's also the worst track on the album in that it's lyrically and musically so *basic*, if not plain dull. Another hit? *No* chance. (There are three other tracks on the 12" *not* from the current album.)

DEEP PURPLE: 'Call Of The Wild' (Polydor)
Excellent! A bit lighter than I imagine a lot of Purple fans might want, but nevertheless a surprisingly (for me) good song. A very catchy opening riff and a good, strong verse which leads you by the hand into one of those ridiculously singalong choruses that Todd Rundgren can seemingly pull out of a hat at will. In fact, if I hadn't known better, I would have put money on Rundgren having a hand in this, the overall production style being so 'him'.

I'm not a Purple fan but I'd love to see this do well simply because it's such a good song, performed with a sort of . . . subtlety that I'd normally not credit Purple with.

THE CULT: Jimmy Page not pictured

EDDIE MONEY: 'Take Me Home Tonight' (CBS)
American-flavoured rock with a sugar-coating of ex-Ronnette Ronnie Spector singing the only line anyone ever remembers her for: 'Be my little baby/Baby my darling/Oh, oh, oh, oh'. Remember it? Sounds okay on the first couple of listens, but not a song which benefits from repeated listening.

CINDERELLA: 'Shake Me' (Vertigo)
Another 'original' title! Cinderella look such pillocks with all that 'big hair', glam business. Add to that the pantomime name and you almost expect something close to an Eighties Sweet. But 'Shake Me' is, in fact, a lot closer to AC/DC than to Sweet: strong vocal, instrumentally raw and aggressive, and a good guitar solo to boot.

THE BIG DISH: 'Christina's World' (Virgin)
The follow-up to last year's excellent yet shamefully overlooked 'Slide'. The Big Dish may not have a clue when it comes to a decent choice of name but, with these two singles, they show an ability to write quality pop/rock songs of which there are far too few about these days. A simple, driving bass line makes it perfect in-car listening, and therefore a likely contender in America. (Maybe there was petrol rationing there when Boston got to Number One).

NUCLEAR ASSAULT: 'Brain Death' (Under One Flag)
Alternating Thrash speed with a slow-ish riff, but lacking real power in the former and anything of particular interest in the latter. Done well, Thrash can be marvellously exciting and invigorating. Done less than well, though not necessarily badly – as is the case here – it's like revving-up the engine then shutting it down again without ever moving off the spot.

THE CULT: 'Love Removal Machine' (Beggars Banquet)
The opening riff to Whitesnake's 'Slide It In' (according to 'Krusher'), after which the Cult proceed to belt out the best single of the week with more than a touch of Zeppelin circa their first album, prompting the question at a Virgin Records meeting: "Has Jimmy Page joined The Cult then?" He hasn't, but the question isn't as ridiculous as it may seem. If this raw, lean, aggressive power-rock is the Cult's new direction, then order the forthcoming album *now*.

The above is what I thought after hearing an early version of the record. However, it's now been re-mixed, with less punchy drums and the addition of tambourine, among other things. The 'new' version? Not quite as good, but still an excellent single. (If only they'd left it *alone*, though.)

SLADE: 'Still The Same' (RCA)
After another recent buffeting from Slade's perennial Xmas hit in every pub in the country I thought it would be a blessing to hear them singing *anything* other than '. . . Merry Christmas/ Everybody's having fun . . .' But I doubt if many of us will have much fun listening to this soggy offering.

The uptempo B-side, on the other hand, with its vaguely ZZ Top-ish instrumental middle-eight, is far more listenable and would have stood a much better chance.

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KOMMUNICATION

Say it loud to *Kerrang!*, Spotlight Publications, Greater London House, Hampstead Road, London NW1 7QZ

DEEP THINKER

JUST THOUGHT I'd send a letter to Kommunication as a way of testing the writing set I received for Christmas. But seeing as I've started, I may as well write something suitable for your mighty publication (slurpy slurpy bum lick).

For beginners, most of the letters that appear in your hallowed pages are addressed to the writer of a previous letter. This reply will then proceed to slag off everything in the other letter, claiming that anyone capable of writing such drivel should be locked up in a padded cell with Cronos (you have to slag off Venom if you write to *Kerrang!*). The letter will then go on to praise a local one-man skiffle group, signing off with a stupid invented name.

Why the hell can't we leave each other alone, enjoy the music we like and let others enjoy their favourites too? And now that I've come down on the positive side, let me praise Deep Purple's new 'The House Of Blue Light' LP. When they reformed, I went into mourning for six months because I love Rainbow and Whitesnake (you may remember them; if you don't, ask your grandma to lend you their last albums!). 'Perfect Strangers', the first post-reformation Purple album, did nothing to change my stubborn mind, *but* 'THOBL' is a real brainstormer of an LP. I personally preferred Purple with David Coverdale ('Come Taste The Band' is my favourite LP), but I have to concede that the MK II boys (?!) have come good with their latest opus.

This letter is probably too long to print *(probably – Ed)*, but if it *is* printed I'll wait with fever-pitched excitement for someone calling themselves 'Pete Way's whiskey bottle, suffering from severe depression' to write in and slag off everyone ever connected with Deep Purple! As Mr. Coverdale would say, cheers! God bless ya! Here's to rock 'n' roll! **Neal D. Jackson, Mansfield, Notts.**

FEMALE FURY (I)

I AM writing to you because I've just about had enough of male musicians. In the past three months I've been to five auditions and each time I've been told I've got a great voice but that women don't belong in the Heavy Metal world except for the likes of Lita Ford and Dorothee Pesch.

I was once offered the post of lead vocalist in a band providing I slept with the drummer, but would not lower myself to do such a sluttish thing.

No doubt this letter won't get printed because you too believe that women (except for the ones with big boobs and a fast nature) don't belong in Heavy Metal. By the way, I'd be grateful if anyone out there could help a female vocalist form a Dudley-based rock group – providing you're not all male chauvinist pigs, that is! **Anthea Johnson, Dudley, West Midlands.**

FEMALE FURY (2)

AFTER BUYING issue 135, I would like to reply to NB, the female HM fan from Edinburgh, who was angry about the pic of the naked woman posing with the two guitars in issue 133. NB asks how you can expect females to be treated equally in the rock business when you print such a sluttish picture for no other reason than the young lady in question has a large pair of tits.

However, I am a female HM fan and I'm sure NB would not be complaining it if was male flesh on show – I know I wouldn't.

As for treating females equally in the rock business, my answer to that is simple: only when females prove that they can deliver the goods just as well as males (which has yet to be seen), will they get parallel treatment. Actually, it wasn't the tits that offended me, but the non-existent waistline and the fat body that accompanied them. **B.A. Bitch, Sheffield.**

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

I HAVE a problem brother (he's not mental, just a complete bastard). Anyway, I try to please him at Christmas and this year I decided that a copy of the *Kerrang! Yearbook* might go down better than the set of water-divining rods I bought him last year. Well, I'm glad to say that it *did*, why he even managed a smile!

Having examined the book myself prior to wrapping, I would just like to say that I was pleasantly surprised by its content. It was good to see the 'Alter-native Warriors' section, proving that bands such as the Mission, New Model Army and Balaam And The Angel *can* be appreciated alongside the more typically heavy groups. It is a literary gem – and so it should be considering the price. **Daisy.**

CAUGHT BY THE NUTZ

AFTER READING the Venom article titled 'Brazil Nutz' in issue 137 I thought you'd like to hear about a letter I got from a Brazilian penpal who was at one of their gigs. The following are his exact words. I quote: *'Venom is the very horrible band that I have seen in my life, for God's sake! Cronos is a very bad bassist, Abaddon is a joke like drummer and the two new guitarists are a joke! The best moment was when Cronos received an electric shock on the microphone; their sound seems like a locomotive passing in your house, horrible!!!'*

Even the Brazilians aren't fooled by the rubbish Venom play! From a discerning headbanger. **Frank Prendergast, Thetford, Norfolk.**

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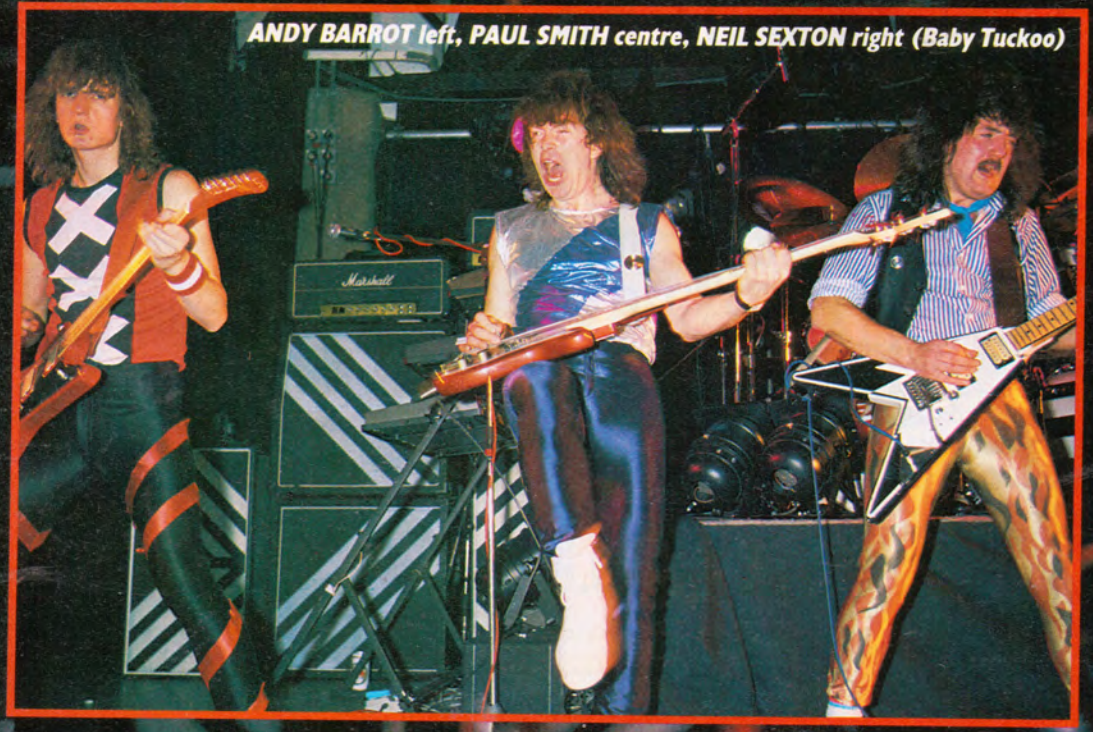
Livin' On A Prayer

"The idea is to lure punters to the gigs with a decent bill and prove to them that there *are* bands in this country who can play." As BABY TUCKOO and CHROME MOLLY hit the road on a double-headed 'Britain Strikes Back' tour, can they manage to inject some life into a flagging UK rock scene? MARK PUTTERFORD joins them on two early dates 'Oop North' to find out

ROB ARMITAGE (Baby Tuckoo)

NIK WASTELL (Chrome Molly)



ANDY BARROT left, PAUL SMITH centre, NEIL SEXTON right (Baby Tuckoo)

RULE BRITTANIA? Not likely, mate. Much as it pains this patriotic pen-pusher to admit it, the days when this sceptred isle ruled the (sound) waves have disappeared like Phil Collins' fringe, and where once was a hard rock business throbbing with Stock Exchange-type activity there now only seems to be the enterprise of Bert's Corner Shop.

Despite the fact that we here at *Kerrang!* regularly uncover promising new rock outfits with *real* potential, record companies appear willing to take less chances than Steve Davis at his most boring and young bands, however talented, are having to face up to the fact that unless they happen to have a gigantic dome of dosh behind them, the likelihood of them making it in this worsening, money-mad rock biz is on a par with Telford's FA Cup chances.

It's sickening. Sure *some* British rock bands are still doing huge world-wide business – like the Maidens, bless 'em, Queen and Ozzy – but their numbers are dwindling, and as The Foreigners mass their ranks and continue to make royalty-reaping raids on our charts with all the huge-fisted help major record companies can muster, the fact that these same companies are offering virtually sod-all help to the building of a new generation of homegrown hard rock acts seems to be ensuring that Blighty's Boys will have to forget about flying the flag and think more in terms of waving postcard-sized pendants in the coming years.

Yet there *are* good young rock bands in this country at the moment – great ones, even. Take Baby Tuckoo and Chrome Molly, for example: they may not be able to wear expensive, eye-catching, designer clothes, make expensively-produced records and put on enormous, gimmicky shows . . . but musically they're as good as – *better* even – than a lot of these high-profile foreign bands, let me tell you.

The difference? Money. Money to burn on creating a strong image, money to flash before the 'mince pies' of top record producers and money to tart-up stages wherever they go. The Tuckoos and Mollys are living on a shoestring, major label bands have their laces neatly knotted for them . . . and at the moment, in this country at least, our two handy hopefuls are all tied up.

SO WHAT do they do? After spending the vast majority of '86 on their backsides, they decided to join forces and take

KONTINUEZ OVER

Pix Ross Halfin

STEVE HAWKINS (Chrome Molly)

Livin' On A Prayer

FROM PREVIOUZ PAGE

a powerchord package of ball-breaking Brit rock around the country in an attempt to drum up some interest from punters and major record companies alike. 16 dates, from Nottingham to Norwich and Spennymoor to Soho, with the two main mobs headlining alternately and a third band – a local outfit from each town wherever possible – making up the VFM deal. And if *that* doesn't work . . .

"Originally we wanted to have a band from the North, a band from the South and us from the Midlands," explains Steve Hawkins, grandson of Jim and the cocky, charismatic singer of Chrome Molly. "But Chariot, the intended band from the South, were too busy or something, and so we just decided to go ahead with the Tuckoos and use different supports."

"Y'see, we've been trying to tour Britain once a year, and in fact we have done for the past three years or so," says Molly's bassist Nik Wastell, who hit upon the idea for the tour last Summer. "But we've just been treading the same boards and we thought it was pointless doing it all again – so we thought we'd approach it from a different angle this time, to make it more interesting.

"It's called the 'Britain Strikes Back' tour and it's really in the same tradition as the 'Metal For Muthas' thing – although not on the same scale as we don't have that kind of financial backing. The idea is to lure punters to the gigs with a decent bill and prove to them that there *are* bands in Britain who can play."

So with these objectives in mind, Baby Molly (as it were) started their nationwide knees-up in sunny Spennymoor, just south of Durham, midway through shivering January. In the finest tradition of the two bands' bad luck, the first couple of shows, in Sheffield and Dinnington, had to be cancelled due to the odd snowflake or two. But by the 16th the weather had thrown the best of its punches and wheels began to roll at last.

Unfortunately, the gig at Spennymoor, inside the main hall of a reasonably large and luxurious leisure centre, was very much a case of 'it *won't* be alright on the night'. Crimson Pink, the local band, were OK – despite all their embarrassingly obvious Bon Jovi/Ratt reference points, they worked hard and seemed to have some good material, like 'Private Party'.

And Chrome Molly, tonight acting as the headliners and putting on a typical 101%, 'all or nothing' performance, were as enjoyable as ever.

CHROME MOLLY: 'totally irresistible onstage'

But paralysingly consistent sound problems forced Tuckoo to end their set early and proved a right downer to band and audience alike. Still, they were rocking while it lasted, and one member of the crowd couldn't resist belching, "It's about time you had bands like Tuckoo and Molly on the cover of *Kerrang!* instead of all these American wankers!" into my ear during their set. Say no more . . .

THE SECOND night at Bradford University was thankfully gremlin-free. Harlequyn were the opening band and they did their best without ever threatening to be a match for the two which followed.

Molly again were exciting, exhilarating and exuberant, having become totally irresistible onstage, and packed in a set of hernia-inducing angst: 'Bob Geldof', 'CMA', 'I Want To Find Out', 'Stand Proud', 'Take Me I'm Yours', 'Somethin' Special', 'Steel Against The Sky' and more – all delivered with humour and conviction, and further enhanced by the band's rapidly increasing confidence and stage presence. They really have come on a treat.

And then there was Tuckoo, headlining this nifty shindig in front of a healthy homegrown turn-out and fittingly executing an enjoyable set which featured the best of their two albums, like 'Keep It Together', 'Falling Star', 'Rock (Rock)', 'The Lights Go Down', 'Maybe', 'Mony Mony' and 'Shoot On Sight'.

Although not visually as entertaining as Molly, Tuckoo really do have some magnificent material and with singer Rob Armitage – a vocal volcano, who's without doubt one of the finest rock singers I've ever worked with – leading the way, they pin you to the wall with their power and precision. Image-wise Baby Tuckoo may still be a long way off target, but their music is a definite 'bullseye'.

Actually, this is the first tour Tuckoo have undertaken in some time. They released their fine 4½-K album, 'Force Majeure', early in '86, but somehow never made it out onto the road to promote it. Rob explains why.

"We really wanted to move up a rung," he says. "We'd been around all the clubs and it felt like we were just flogging a dead horse. So we tried to get on a bigger tour, like the Magnum tour and the Saxon tour, but they were just asking ridiculous prices; Magnum wanted £15,000 from their support band."

"We were also hoping to get on an agency," sez Paul Smith, Tuckoo's bassist, "but there's only about two decent agencies for rock bands in this country and they're not interested in bands of our stature."

"No, agencies and record companies in this country just don't seem to want to know rock bands these days," rues Tuckoo's keyboard player and rhythm guitarist Andy Barrott. "There's plenty of talent about, but the people who're in positions to make or break bands just don't want to take any risks."

"And it's confusing, because bands like Europe and Bon Jovi have *proved* that rock can be a commercial success in this country . . . and yet our companies still don't seem prepared to take a gamble on bands like that," adds Paul. "It really is crazy that us and Molly have got a lot of interest in America from major record companies, and nowt here."

"Yeah, it seems like the Americans don't mind a gamble," Andy points out. "They're so positive about everything they'll just say, 'We'll do this, we'll do that, we'll have you on the road with so-and-so in a coupla weeks . . .' and they're into it 100%."

All this praise of America is hardly surprising when you consider that Tuckoo have recently been talking to a big Florida-based company, and are in fact finalising a contract

BABY TUCKOO: 'they pin you to the wall with their power and precision'

right now which'll certainly give them a big break t'other side of the pond. And, as Paul mentioned, the Mollys have also attracted Stateside chequebooks and hope to be signing on the dotted line for a big label over there imminently.

"We recorded an album for Powerstation some time ago," explains Steve, "and although it was never released our manager took the tapes around to every single major record company in the country, and only one showed any interest. Then he went to the States and had six majors buzzing around him like flies. And then when we went over to play in New York a couple of weeks ago we had representatives from ten majors come to see us play two gigs!

"I don't know why, but Britain doesn't seem to want to touch us. We've sold more records in Germany than we have in Britain, and we've never been anywhere near the place. It's unbelievable, isn't it? We've toured this country like mad and we can't sell a sausage – yet we're doing a roaring trade in a foreign place."

"There's British groups around who can wipe the floor with Bon Jovi, all it needs is for someone to put as much money into one of those bands – like us or Molly – as they have into Bon Jovi and we can crack it too" – ROB ARMITAGE (BABY TUCKOO)

SO WILL Molly – who also feature guitarist John Antcliffe and drummer Mark Godfrey – give up the ghost if this tour fails to get the ball rolling over here?

"No, we're a British band and it'd mean a lot to us to make it in Britain," sez Nik, "so we'd never give up. But we have got to concentrate more on other territories because it seems foreign audiences take us and our kind of music more seriously."

"I mean, Powerstation have been great to us, but we've gone as far as we can go on that line and we've got to take the next step. The States are keen on us, so we'll have a go over there and then hopefully come back here when we're established to have another bash.

"It really is sad, isn't it? The business over here has really let us down and we're very disappointed. I can't see it getting any better either, can you? All the great festivals have dwindled, too. Reading used to be a fantastic breaking ground for young bands, yet this year was a right flop. And Donington? Well, the promotors have to put big names on the bill because they're desperately trying to pull punters, and so young bands don't get a sniff. I mean, when you've got Mötley Crüe opening . . ."

"I think the business over here is afraid to take risks because of the few failures they've had," Steve considers. "Three years ago quite a few hard rock bands were signed, like Tobruk and Shy for example, yet those bands flopped and the record companies lost a bit of money on them all. So now they've been bitten they're not so keen to take another gamble."

"In fact, I think if we were offered a British deal now I think we'd have to give it a great deal of thought, because I don't think a British company can do for us what an American one can," Nik adds. "Over there they're keen, excited and really on the case. Here, they just don't seem to know what to do with a hard rock band, and they just don't seem that bothered about it. Do you know we had people from American record companies fly over just to see us play in a little pub in Leicester? In this country we play The Marquee and can't even get record company people to come across the road to see us! It's disgusting really, isn't it?

"But then America is more of a rock country. It's *cool* to be into Iron Maiden over there, whereas if you tell someone you're into Maiden over here they'll snigger."

"And you've access to rock almost anywhere in America – on all the FM radio stations, on MTV and stuff like that – whereas over here what have we got?" asks Steve. "A couple of hours on Radio One on Friday night when everyone's at the pub and the very occasional HM Special on the telly. And then it's done so badly – like with 'ECT' and the 'Tube HM Special' – that it all seems like a big joke."

"*Kerrang!* is the only music paper that takes HM seriously, too – all the others take the piss out of it," Nik moans. "There just isn't that kind of prejudice towards Metal in America.

"The business really is in a bad way over here, isn't it? In all areas. And it all comes down to the fact that the major record companies won't sign young British rock bands, invest money into them, give them time to develop and really try to break them. In the '70s Phonogram had a reputation for signing rock bands and taking them to the top – like Sabbath, Quo and Thin Lizzy – but now they just don't want to take a chance on a British rock band. They'll only sign you if you're a 'name' already – like Dio."

"Hopefully, the recent success of Bon Jovi and Europe will make these record companies realise that they can make money by signing and promoting rock bands," says Paul. "I'm glad those bands did well – although I wouldn't say either of them are anything special – and I hope they stay in the charts. But why have foreign bands done it? Why can't a British band get that kind of success in it's own country?"

"There's British groups around who can wipe the floor with Bon Jovi," Rob reckons, "all it needs is for someone to put as much money into one of those bands – like us or Molly – as they have into Bon Jovi and we can crack it too. Record companies have got to have faith in young British rock bands, otherwise the scene could die."

"Yeah, the big bands are getting bigger and the smaller bands are getting smaller – just like the majors are getting bigger and the indies are getting smaller," adds Nik, "and there's a big hole in the middle that needs to be filled fast. At the moment you can't get into the middle – it's a wasteland."

ONE THING you can't fault either band for is trying to force their way onto higher rungs of the ladder; they've both gone to extreme lengths to try to get noticed by the right people, and both laugh at some of their exploits as we sit in the bar of a Bradford hotel.

"You've just got to be as obnoxious as possible and *make* people take notice of you," grins Steve.

"The only way we can hope to do this is to nag people to the point where they think, 'They're not gonna f**k off so we may as well give 'em a chance to shut 'em up'," Nik considers. "Me and Steve go to London from Leicester every two weeks and just make a nuisance of ourselves. And we'll do that until people give in to us. We did that to Peter Mensch and he ended up helping us out a lot. Whereas if we'd sent him a tape his secretary would've probably just binned it."

"We've sent tapes to people that have been paused at a certain point, and we've asked them to send it back to us if they don't like it," Rob chips in. "Those tapes have come back at exactly the same point."

"We find out the phone numbers of the top people and ring them up, telling their secretary that it's Gary Glitter or someone. Then when they put us through we say, 'Actually, it's not Gary Glitter, it's Nik from Chrome Molly . . .'," says Nik, "because that's the only way you can get through to them."

"I get to Rod McSween (booking agent at ITB) all the time by ringing and just saying, 'Is Rod there? It's Steve . . .' and the secretary thinks I'm Steve Barnet, Gary Moore's manager, and puts me straight through!" laughs Steve.

"You have to be crafty," admits Rob, "although we even resort to pleading. When we did the 'Tears Of A Clown' single we picked a couple of DJs each and wrote to them saying it was our last chance to do something, and that if it didn't do well we'd be dropped by our record company (*Music For Nations*), so would they *please* listen to it and, if they think it's good, play it. Now, by no stretch of the imagination is it bad, but it didn't get played once.

"It's very disillusioning when people don't bother giving you a chance. I mean, we've spent a lot of money organising a showcase, we've rung everyone up on the day to remind them and they all say they're coming . . . then no-one turns up. I mean, they've only got to come across London! I reckon there's too many people in major record companies who aren't doing their job properly, and a lot of good bands are going to waste."

"So let's get off our arses and do something about it – that's what the 'Britain Strikes Back' tour is all about," says Nik. "We're also trying to recapture the spirit of the NWOBHM, when bands stuck together – like Maiden and Samson an' that. At the moment HM bands just don't seem to stick together and help each other out. Let's all work for each other and do favours whenever we can. For example, I really think the bigger bands should try to give the younger bands a break . . . like support slots."

"But it's like 'ever decreasing circles' at the moment," Steve complains, "because ticket sales are going down, promoters are having to put on more well known bands as support acts . . . and the younger bands don't stand a chance. *And* all the decent tours in this country are 'buy-ons' . . . so that again stumps the non-major label bands like us."

"OK, so people should look for other ways of promoting the younger bands," Nik counters. "Let's have major labels releasing compilations with unknown bands alongside a couple of tracks from their major acts to sell it. Let's have *Kerrang!* getting back into flexi-discs. Let's have . . ."

. . . And there we must leave the hyper-active mind of Nik Wastell. Chrome Molly and Baby Tuckoo have a lot of ideas between them as to how Britain can nurture its spotty sprogs into stadium-strutters, and let's hope that, at least, airing their views in this 'ere scrawl makes people, especially those in positions to orchestrate change, think a little more about the rather disappointing deterioration of the British rock scene and . . . DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!!!

For FREE inclusion in our new, improved Tour Newz page, write to: Malcolm Dome, Kerrang!, Spotlight Publications, Greater London House, Hampstead Road, London NW1 7QZ.

TOUR NEWZ

Deadline for inclusion in this section is at least two weeks prior to publication date. Wherever possible, please include a black and white photo with the gig info.

MR. THRUD! *(lead vocalist* ***Toby Jepson*** *above) play dates at Scarborough Theatre In The Round on February 13/14.*

The band also intend to begin work shortly on a 12" single. As yet, no more details are available.

COBRA *(above), from Lancaster, play dates at Morecombe Flying Dutchman February 6, Ellesmere Port Ellesmere Arms 7, Sheffield George IV 8, Wrexham Kings Arms 12, Crewe Cheshire Cheese 13, West Bromwich Coach & Horses 14, Pontypridd Pitz 20, Cardiff Bogey's 21, Llanharan Rugby Football Club 22, Birkenhead Hard Rock Cavern 27, Liverpool Wilson's 28, Glasgow Shadows March 6, Kilmarnock Burns Bar 7, Hebden Bridge Shoulder Of Mutton 13, Ellesmere Port Ellesmere Arms 14, Rawtenstall Queens Arms 20.*

THE CULT will now play Cardiff St. David's Hall on March 23 and not Newport Centre as previously announced.

BABY TUCKOO and **CHROME MOLLY** have re-arranged the following dates: Sheffield University February 4 (originally scheduled for January 14), Dinnington Lyric Hall February 5 (originally scheduled for January 15).

THE MACC LADS continue their 'Don't Catch AIDS Tour' with dates at Blackpool Your Father's Moustache February 6, Macclesfield Secret Venue 14, Rotherham Shipmates 18, Blackburn Top Hat 21.

DRN play Coventry Polytechnic February 4, London Queen Mary College 5, Tonbridge Angel Centre 7, Reading Majestic 10, Birmingham Mermaid 14, Oxford Corn Dolly 17, Lampeter St. David's College 20, Bradford Frog & Toad 26.

RUBICON will play a St. Valentine's Day Spectacular at Darlington Arts Centre Theatre on February 14. Tickets are priced at £2 (£1.50 for unemployed and students).

LINE OF FIRE, from London, play Harlesden The Mean Fiddler on February 4.

APRIL 16TH, from London, play Surbiton The Southampton on February 6.

TRIDENT, from Glasgow, play Alexandria Ladyton Bar February 7, Paisley Windy's 14.

MANDRAKE, from the Surrey area, play Cricklewood Production Village The Hog's Grunt on February 9.

VICTORIAN KITCHEN, from the Glasgow area, play Glasgow Midas February 5, Glasgow Shadows 10, Glasgow The Doune 14.

TERMINUS 5, a five-piece from County Down, play Belfast Rossetta Bar March 3, Belfast Errigle Inn 5, Ballamena The Halt 7, Coleraine University 12, Derry O'Neils Bar 14, Dublin Playhouse 20, Waterford The Spotlight Club 21, Galway The Emerald 22, Strandhill The Strand Bar 27. Support act on all dates will be

SHY *(above) will be supporting* ***Meat Loaf*** *on his forthcoming UK tour, dates for which are as follows: Brighton Centre February 14/15, Birmingham NEC 18/19, Edinburgh Playhouse 21/22, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne City Hall 24/25, Bournemouth International Centre 28, Wembley Arena March 1/2.*

After the Meat Loaf dates Shy will support ***Gary Moore*** *on his British tour: Edinburgh Playhouse March 26, Birmingham NEC 28, Sheffield City Hall 29, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne City Hall 30, Hammersmith Odeon April 2/3.*

THE ELECTRIC GYPSIES *(pictured above), who were previously called* ***Tormé****, play London Marquee Club on February 13.*

HIM*, a sextet from Birmingham, play Dudley JB's February 5, Oldbury Hen & Chickens 6, Birmingham The Dome March 10.*

The band's line-up (pictured above) is: ***Lloyd Pusey*** *(lead vocals),* ***Danny McKoy*** *(lead guitar),* ***Tracey Whittingham*** *(rhythm guitar),* ***ABU*** *(bass),* ***Owen Broomfield*** *(keyboards) and* ***Andrew Griffiths*** *(drums).*

all-girl group **Baagock**.

The band, who have just released an album titled **'When The S**t Hits The Fan'** on the Diamond Discs label, now have the following line-up: **Michael Knight** (lead vocals), **Zak Speed** (lead guitar), **Gary Caulfield** (bass), **Vim Scullion** (drums) and **Sean 'Nemesis' Quinn** (rhythm guitar/keyboards).

AVAIL, from Scotland, will be appearing at Glasgow Shadows February 6, Edinburgh Clowns 7, Scotstown Jarvies 12, Edinburgh Clowns 21, Duntocher Glenhead Tavern 27.

KATRINA AND THE WAVES play Harlesden The Mean Fiddler on March 5/6/7.

HAZE will be appearing at Chesterfield Bolsover Sportsdrome on February 16.

RXN, a five-piece from Cheshire, play Warrington Lion Hotel February 7, Wrexham Kings Arms 16, Bootle Fire Station 17, Millom Crystals Night Club 27, Pontypridd The Clarence Hotel March 6.

The band's line-up is **Vinnie Thornton** (vocals/keyboards), **Andy Bennett** (guitar/vocals), **Tracey Murdoch** (keyboards/vocals), **Neil Cottam** (bass) and **Jez Hindmarsh** (drums).

EXCALIBUR play Hereford Market Tavern February 6, Cardiff Bogey's 7, Llanharan Rugby Football Club 8, Shrewsbury Derek's Club 21, Bristol Fleece & Firkin 22, Bootle Fire Station 24, Telford Barons Club 26, Bournemouth 141 Club 27, Chichester Rock Club 28.

CHASAR *(above) will be appearing at Edsel Gangway Club February 6, Thurso Way Inn 14, Glasgow Shadows 20.*

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MONEY-SAVING MEGADETH TICKET OFFER-PLUS WIN A TRIP TO SEE THE BAND LIVE IN PARIS!

IF YOU'VE read the story on page two of this here killer issue of *Kerrang!*, you'll already know the nuclear news that the maniacal Megadeth will be playing a one-off date at London's Hammersmith Odeon on March 6, supported by Phoenix firebrands Flotsam And Jetsam.

The official ticket price for the show is £5.50 – but the coupon on this page entitles y'all to a pulse-pounding £1 DISCOUNT, bringing the price down to just £4.50!

All you have to do is clip out the coupon and present it (or post it) along with your money to the Hammersmith Odeon box office. But remember – this discount is only available *direct* from the Hammersmith Odeon, strictly on a first come, first served basis. It *cannot* be used at ticket agencies, etc.

In addition to this money-saving Megadeth offer, we've got a titillating competition for you: the chance to win a trip for two to see Megadeth live in Paris on March 15!

You'll get to meet the band *and* have your photograph taken for inclusion in *Kerrang!*

We've also got runner-up prizes of 100 copies of the sensational new Megadeth album 'Peace Sells . . . But Who's Buying?' plus 25 exclusive videos of the LP's title track, which are not available commercially!

Just answer the three questions here, scribble your answers on a postcard or the back of an envelope and send it to:

Kerrang! Megadeth Competition, Spotlight Publications, Greater London House, Hampstead Road, London NW1 7QZ.

1. Complete the following Megadeth album title: 'Killing Is My Business . . .'

2. Complete the surnames of the four members of Megadeth. Dave ★★★★★★★★, Dave ★★★★★★★★, Gar ★★★★★★★★★, Chris ★★★★★★.

3. 'Peace Sells . . . But Who's Buying?' is Megadeth's debut LP release for which major record label?

Kerrang! offer

KWID OFF

Megadeth Hammersmith Odeon gig, March 6

LIZZY BORDEN: the arena stage beckons . . .

DIN LIZZY

THE COUNTRY CLUB stage was soaked with blood and the aftermath of Metal carnage. Lizzy Borden, the man and the band, gave the hometown kids the axe and left them seeing red and screaming for more. As the chanting of "LIZZY LIZZY" reached a deafening peak, the band hit the stage and Lizzy leapt out of his box sporting a maniacal gleam and brandishing a baseball bat, signalling the start of the two-hour Metal massacre.

It was obvious from the outset that the two shows LB opened recently for Alice Cooper had added a few new twists to their set, with Lizzy side-stepping the subtle theatrics of his mentor as his wailings echoed throughout the hall, sounding the battle cry for the barrage, each attack more vicious than the one before.

From the first note of 'Generation Aliens' to the final blow of 'Live And Let Die' the set never lost its momentum. Throughout the show the baseball bat was replaced with various dismembered body parts, bouquets of flowers promptly chopped into bits, the all-familiar axe and at one point near the end a helpless teddy bear was handed up by a female devotee only to be gleefully decapitated by Lizzy's teeth, adding stuffing and fur to the stage decor.

One of the many highpoints of the show was watching Lizzy chase a man carrying a PMRC briefcase around the stage with his baseball bat and, to the crowd's delight, pulling out a pistol and shooting him 'dead' on the spot. Lizzy showed the crowd how 'Love Kills' by first physically assaulting – for want of a better term – a woman and then dragging her screaming into his box where he abruptly ended the affair with the almighty axe. With his victim's remains splattered all over his costume, he finished the song then left the stage only to return draped in the stars 'n' stripes for a dose of 'American Metal'.

The majority of the set consisted of tracks from the band's latest 'Menace To Society' album, although shouts of 'Redrum' and other Borden classics could be heard for miles. Judging from the crowd's response the show was a success. I haven't seen the Country Club trashed like this since Metallica opened for Metal Church a while back. Fantastic!

I can't wait to see Lizzy Borden on an arena stage where they belong. The intimacy of a club is great, but Lizzy Borden are truly an *event*

SABRINA FREES-PERKIN

EDDIE MONEY
Madison Square Garden, New York

ALTHOUGH HE opened this Christmas charity concert and Cyndi Lauper was billed as headliner, Eddie Money was as much the star of the show as the red-headed songstress.

Dressed in an irridescent blue shirt and shiny grey trousers, Money looked more like a teen idol from the 1950s than an '80s rocker. Everything about him is comfortably familiar and friendly, from his lopsided grin to his stage stance. I've seen him numerous times in concert and always enjoyed the show, though it's not breathtaking like, say, a Mötley Crüe concert with its pyrotechnics and choreography, nor startlingly precise in its musicianship á la Eric Clapton or Jeff Beck. Instead, Money reminds me of the quintessential barroom singer who has perfected his craft, with each performance being – excuse the pun – bang on the money.

Standing centre-stage, the native New Yorker who deserted his home town for San Francisco some years ago completely dispensed with any kind of stage show, backdrop, flashy lights or smoke bombs. He simply paced from one end of the stage to the other, continually grabbing his hair and swaying with the mikestand. By way of contrast, his band of hot shots, all young musicians with matching crop-top hair cuts, were perfect in their understated back-up. Clearly, Money was the main attraction.

In fine voice, he created a comfortable atmosphere and established a rapport with his fans. Pulling faces, singing with closed eyes and out of one side of his mouth, he appeared almost goofy, like the guy in school whose shirt was always coming out of his trousers!

I'd actually forgotten just how many hit songs Money has had – and how far back they stretch. With perfect pacing, he sang each and every one, pleasing the crowd over and over. 'Baby Hold On To Me', 'Two Tickets To Paradise', 'Shakin'' proved the most popular, soliciting chorus sing alongs from the audience, on their feet and swaying.

They greeted his first exit with whistles, stomps and screams, demanding his return. They got what they wanted and it surprised no-one that, as Money sang 'Take Me Home Tonight', his current single and the one that resurrected a dormant career, the legendary Ronnie Spector came bounding out of the wings to join him onstage. What *was* surprising was the comedy that ensued.

Wearing an ill-fitting strapless black mini dress that I suppose was meant to look sexy, the ageing Spector wiggled more than a plate of fresh jello. From my vantage point in the seventh row, it was painfully obvious that this woman, probably one of the most underrated and distinctive female voices of the 1960s, didn't have a clue how to perform with dignity.

What followed next was a rather paltry version of the holiday tune 'Frosty The Snowman', a hit for The Ronnettes in their heyday, but lost on an audience who couldn't remember *that* far back. Sealing the coffin with one last nail, Money invited Spector to return for a last chorus encore of 'Take Me. . .'; freak show time, boys and girls!

That said, however, I'd like to see Money back headlining his own shows at this time next year so we can experience a *full* set. I bet the man can still cook, and not just politely simmer.

IDA S. LANGSAM

EXCALIBUR
Marquee, London

BRADFORD-BASED quintet Excalibur have been doing the rounds for some years now, putting out an indifferent mini-album ('The Bitter End') on Conquest Records, and recording a so-so session for Tommy Vance along the way. But up until now their impact on the UK Metal scene has been little more than negligible and, on this showing, their lot seems unlikely to improve much in the near future.

They seem to be lost just now, their music not being melodic enough to give the excellent Kooga and their ilk a run for their money, yet not powerful enough either to trouble our handful of harder bands. And, in common with so many other young UK acts, image remains a great problem for Excalibur. In fact, as soon as they'd left the stage I'd forgotten what they looked like!

However, the addition of second guitarist/occasional keyboard player Steve Blades is a shrewd more. As a consequence, the newer material bites that bit harder than the aforementioned vinyl, shifting emphasis from Def Leppard to Iron Maiden territory. 'Death's Door' from their 'Friday Rock Show' session benefitted particularly from the added width, easily the best of an average bunch of songs and closing the set on a definite high.

As soon as headliners Vow Wow took to the stage, however, the gulf between Excalibur's current status and the sort of professionalism they need to attain couldn't have been more sharply accentuated.

PAUL MILLER

BERLIN
NEC, Birmingham

SURE, I WAS as dubious as you about this little number! Berlin? 'Take My Breath Away'? Piffle that even the departed Mr. Suter would have found uncomfortably cloying! Worthy of exceedingly short shrift from my pen! Still, orders is orders and moolah is moolah, so when the command came from on high, I was NEC-bound, vowing not to hang around for a dose of the Frankies!

Strewth, now I see what everybody was getting at! It's patently obvious when you see Berlin doing it raw, naked and steaming that they don't give a toss about their number one, 'cos all they really wanna do is get down and burn!

Well, maybe that's going a bit far. Berlin let it all hang out in a pleasant, safe, AOR-ish sort of fashion, but it can't be denied that there's a reasonable amount of time-honoured guitar grimacing going on! Why they have to employ a full-time keyboardist and then get a noncy bassist to jump on the ivories at every opportunity is beyond me! Certain people would call it 'textured' while I'd call it 'detracting baloney'! Still, that probably says a lot about me!

Berlin do possess Terri Nunn however, a charming, whirling dervish of a front-lady who makes up what she lacks in stature with lung power and sheer enthusiasm. She can put a warmth into the likes of 'Love Won't Wait' and 'You Don't Know' – and that's a compliment in my book!

Not even delightful Terri could

rescue the horrible mush of 'All Tomorrow's Lies' however, though 'Like Flames' did raise even my tediously steady pulse a shade!

I came totally unprepared! C'mon, why *should* I know anything about Berlin? I came away mildly impressed but, more importantly, pondering how much of their earnings the male members of Berlin spend on hairspray. Not one curl out of place in a 45 minute set is some achievement! One of rock's great unsolved mysteries!

HOWARD JOHNSON

WEAPONS
Marquee, London

WEAPONS? YEAH, WEAPONS! Er, who they? Alright, I'll do the explaining . . . Weapons are a seasoned, but not veteran, four-piece rough 'n' tough Heavy Metal act originating from Detroit, Michigan. They're in the UK (maybe for good?) trying to score a record contract and some of them used to be in Cub Coda And The Points (Coda, of course, was leader of Brownsville Station, although Cub himself isn't in Weapons).

A tight band similar in some respects to the Black N' Blue, Ratt, Y & T and Dokken school of cucumber-down-the-strides stuff, though thankfully they are always in possession of killer hooklines and dazzling enthusiasm just when you need it most. In certain ways, Weapons are actually better than a lot of those bands I've mentioned, yet in other ways maybe not . . .

Frontman Tom Ingham's vocals, for instance, sound great when he's up there swinging in the clouds but down on the ground things are decidedly ordinary. Mind you, he looks pretty good . . . well, better looking than Mark Storace for sure and his raps aren't half as embarrassing either!

As far as their songs go, I'd say they've got a minor classic in 'The Rock Starts Here', a strong Mötley Crüe beats giving way to a guitar that ships out harmonics instead of powerchords before crashing into a well horny hookline aided and abetted by triumphant backing vocals.

So, the appeal of Weapons was not in their originality or their melodies (quite minimal actually), but in the way they go about things . . . solidly, and professionally. I'll give 'em seven on a ten scale.

DEREK OLIVER

DUMPY'S RUSTY NUTS/ SAMURAI
Marquee, London

WERE WE really all dancing around the Marquee waving smoking joss-sticks and yelling our heads off, or was it all a psychedelic dream? Any night out with Dumpy's Rusty Nuts – now known as DRN – is usually a signal for hangovers and buzzing ears the following day. But Dumpy Dunnell, guitarist extraordinaire and his merry crew, excelled themselves on a cold Friday night in Wardour Street.

It was the best way to banish the Freeze-Up Blues. Dumpy and his trusty Nuts, Alan Fish on bass and Mick Kirton on drums, were expecting a bleak night at the old Marquee, with a low turn-out. Instead, the place was packed and Dumpy's doubts gave way to high good humour. He even played a request for me, a biting version of 'Sunshine Of Your Love.' It was just one of a selection of great blues'n'rock classics and Nutty originals that help make the raucous and hairy one's performances such a lot of fun.

But behind all the maniacal humour, the biking songs, the send-ups and the streams of insults (directed at his most adoring fans), there lies a serious, highly adept guitar player. If Dumpy's was just a comedy act, it would swiftly grow boring. But for every leer and joke, there's a volley of driving rock.

The Nuts tore into 'Snibob' to loud cheers. Dumpy took charge, roaring, cajoling, joking about himself and rock's sacred cows. 'Hog For You Baby', with Dumpy yelling a triumphant 'Knickers!', may not be prime-time cable TV material, but it certainly had the Marquee laughing.

However, one earnest young French fan didn't find it at all amusing. He collared Dumpy in the bar later, and with astounding nerve complained: "This eez my first visit to London and my friends say I should 'ear rock music at the Marquee, but all I hear is rubbish. How can you talk about Led Zeppelin when you are terrible!"

Said Dumpy: "I tried to explain to him about our sense of humour and that everything we do is steeped in the roots of British rock, but he didn't understand. I should have told him to f**k off!"

As he handed out bundles of smoking joss-sticks to the audience a kind of infectious madness swept through the throng that went beyond mere parody; the sort of nirvana rock music is supposed to produce and so rarely achieves. Having been transported onto a higher plane all I can remember now is the flash of lights, the roar of amplifiers and the seductive stench of incense.

Harsher critics than I say Dumpy has been playing the same numbers for too long. I say, don't stop now. The vast mass of the public must wake up soon to discover the DRN phenomenon.

Dumpy was supported by a fine Welsh band, Samurai, who had brought loads of fans with them. Laden with glamour and talent, they blasted through their set as if they were topping at Madison Square, and indeed it turned out they had just returned from a trip to the States. It was their first time at the Marquee, having driven through the snow all the way from Wales, and they turned on maximum heat with tunes like 'Rock Steady', 'Into The Night' and their big ballad 'The Survivor'.

Len Williams (vocals) leapt around sporting a bare midriff and attacking presence ("My grandmother can scream louder than that – come on!"), backed by a beefy team including Neil Rogers (bass), Craig Rigsdale (guitar), Huw Lewis (guitar) and Mike Evans (drums). They've done a couple of albums for Ebony and, with a strong image, the band deserve greater recognition.

CHRIS WELCH

BRIGHT 'LITES

WITH THEIR self-titled Elektra album gold in the US by the time you read this, the **Georgia Satellites'** prospects for '87 are looking distinctly healthy.

At the time of writing, the album stands at Number 23 in the States and the single, 'Keep Your Hands To Yourself', at 14, with both climbing their respective charts at an impressively rapid rate.

After a short tour recently with management stable-mates **Jason And The Scorchers**, the Satellites are currently churning out their brash brand of high-octane rock 'n' roll as support band on **Bob Seger's** US trek, a position they'll hold for at least the next couple of months. The 'Lites are also pulling 'em in on their own club dates, slotted into the Seger schedule, and somehow found time to 'go nationwide' with television appearances on MTV's New Year's Eve Show and 'American Bandstand'.

The US follow-up 45 will be 'Battleship Chains', also likely to be the next UK single.

Tipped by several *Kerrang*sters as a band to look out for this year, the Georgia Satellites are tentatively planning some European dates for the Spring, though no details are available at present.

Until then, fans . . . Keep The Faith!

PAUL HENDERSON

KULTURE!

EDITED BY MALCOLM DOME

'THE GRAPHIC Novel' is the latest marketing tool employed by the comics industry to launch its product onto the public. What's more, it's working. Comics packaged in the form of trade paperbacks are taking off with a vengeance as regular book retailers appreciate that 1) there's a market for comics that they've previously ignored, and 2) in the graphic novel they're being given a product they can *understand*.

The graphic novel is still a book, true. It's a story made up of pictures but nonetheless it's still a *book*. Here then is a brief guide to some of the graphic novels currently available. They should be obtainable through your local bookshop; failing that you can get them from **Titan Books Distribution** (address below) as well as all the usual comic book specialist shops (**Forbidden Planet, Quality Comics** etc).

Of course, the groundbreaking book issued in this form, the one that stirred the attention of the literary masses in America and made the retail world sit up and take notice, is **Frank Miller**'s epic **'The Dark Knight Returns'** (**Titan**, £8.95). I have mentioned this title before, detailing as it does the return of the Batman, ten years on, to the decaying streets of Gotham to wreak terrible vengeance on the Mutants, a gang of punks who've taken over the city's underworld, the Joker, released prematurely from the insane asylum, and even Superman, who has become a yuppie dog at the heels of the senile Reagan in the White House. Beautifully written and drawn by Miller and lavishly coloured by **Lynn Varley**, 'The Dark Knight Returns' portrays the festering underbelly of modern day society and its potential saviour, the urban terrorist, in exquisite and brutal detail. Totally fascinating, and Batman has never been better handled.

Similarly essential is **Dave Sim**'s truly epic **'High Society'** (**Aardvark-Vanaheim**, around £20, Canadian import). 'High Society' is probably the first 'real' graphic novel in that it presents no less than 25 issues of Sim's **'Cerebus The Aardvark'** in a lavish 512-page paperback. Cerebus began life as a **Conan The Barbarian** parody but has since gone on to become a biting satire on politics, religion, life in general and the comics industry itself in particular. If this sounds a little heavy let me assure you that this book, despite the weighty price, rewards the reader through its superb plot, wonderful dialogue and brilliantly executed artwork.

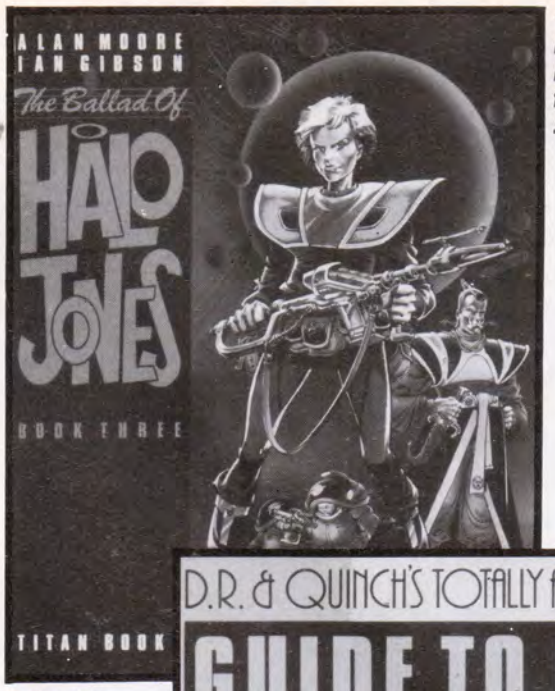
Cerebus arrives at the Regency Hotel in lest and is swept up in the state's internal political turmoil, manipulated by the beautiful **Astoria** against her former husband **Lord Julius** (aka **Groucho Marx**) into running for Prime Minister. Cerebus' opponent turns out to be a goat. Along the way he meets old foes like **Elrod** (a parody of **Moorcock**'s **Elric**), **Moonroach** (a parody of innumerable **Marvel** Superheroes), old loves like **Jaka** (their reunion is a beautifully touching and sadly poignant scene) as well as new characters like the inept **McGrew** brothers. 'High Society', perhaps better than any other graphic novel, shows the range and power that the comic medium can reach. It is funny, serious, biting, moving, an inestimable achievement in the world of the 'funny book'.

The **'Daredevil'** graphic novel (**Marvel**, £4.95), once again features the writing talents of Frank Miller, here coupled with the artistry of **Bill Sienkiewicz**. The two are currently finishing off their eight-part **'Elektra Assassin'** series for **Epic** and, as there, 'Daredevil' has been *painted* as opposed to the usual pencil and ink style. Sienkiewicz has an intriguing abstract style that is at times difficult to grasp and accept. This is not Miller's best work, but still ranks head and shoulders above most of his contemporaries. Not much actually happens here although the violence, graphically rendered, railroads the story of kidnapping and psychomania forward.

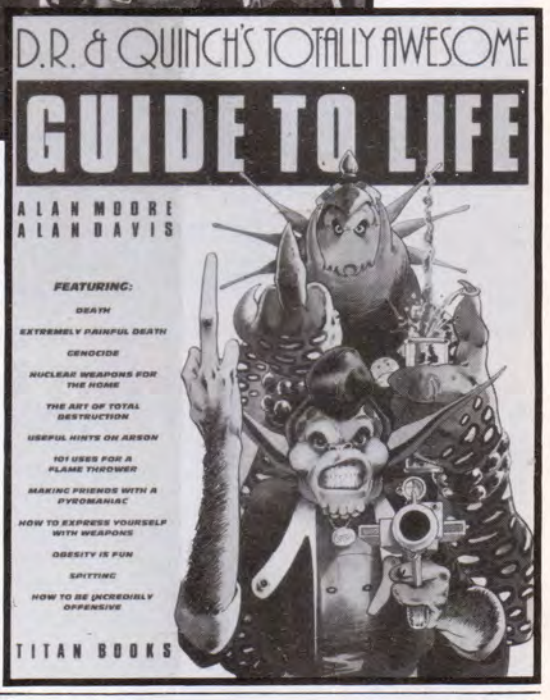
Finally, both **'The Ballad Of Halo Jones Book III'** and **'D. R. & Quinch's Totally Awesome Guide To Life'** feature material reprinted from the pages of **2000AD**, here scripted by comics guru **Alan Moore**. Moore, along with Miller, has become comics' first Superstar and his every utterance now becomes gospel. 'Halo Jones' (**Titan**, £4.95) is illustrated by sometime *Kerrang!* cover artist **Ian Gibson** and this is the last of the series. Halo Jones is an ordinary girl in the 50th century who is somehow forced into the army and its endless alien wars. Moore's avoidance of stereotypes is admirable and the strength of his writing is that you really do care about his characters. Recommended. 'D. R. & Quinch (**Titan**, £4.95) again features the collected tales of some of Moore's more unwholesome characters, and again this marks the end on the line. Moore has vowed never to work for IPC again and a similar falling out with artist **Alan Davies** has ensured the termination of the lovable but psychotic students. Curiously, this book has been slagged elsewhere but we of sterner mettle may prefer the anarchic humour and total devastation unleashed by D. R. Dobbs and his partially brain-dead pal, Quinch.

DAVE DICKSON

For further info, write to: ***Titan Distributors, PO Box 250, London E3 4RT***



◀ 'THE BALLAD Of Halo Jones': frenzy in the 50th Century



'D.R. & QUINCH's Totally Awesome Guide To Life': 'anarchic humour and total devastation' ▶

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LOCAL CHART

1 TRILOGY **Yngwie J. Malmsteen** (Polydor)
2 VINNIE VINCENT INVASION **Vinnie Vincent** (Chrysalis)
3 PEACE SELLS . . . BUT WHO'S BUYING? **Megadeth** (Capitol)
4 STREET LETHAL **Racer X** (Roadrunner)
5 HIGH PRIEST OF LOVE **Zodiac Mindwarp & The Love Reaction** (Food)
6 SOMEWHERE IN TIME **Iron Maiden** (EMI)
7 INSIDE THE ELECTRIC CIRCUS **WASP** (Capitol)
8 NASTY NASTY **Black N' Blue** (Geffen)
9 WHEN THE MIRROR CRACKS **Q5** (Music For Nations)
10 REIGN IN BLOOD **Slayer** (Def Jam/Geffen)
11 JUDAS **Helloween** (Noise)
12 THE DARK **Metal Church** (Elektra)
13 ONE FOOT IN HELL **Cirith Ungol** (Metal Blade)
14 SLIPPERY WHEN WET **Bon Jovi** (Vertigo)
15 SCARRED FOR LIFE **Obsession** (Enigma)
16 THIRD STAGE **Boston** (MCA)
17 DOOMSDAY FOR THE DECEIVER **Flotsam And Jetsam** (Metal Blade)
18 MENACE TO SOCIETY **Lizzy Borden** (Metal Blade)
19 POWER **Kansas** (MCA)
20 PRAISE THE LOUD **CJSS** (Roadrunner)
21 DANCING UNDERCOVER **Ratt** (Atlantic)
22 ENOUGH IS ENOUGH **Billy Squier** (Capitol)
23 HIDEOUS **Krank** (Metal Blade)
24 DEATH AND INSANITY **Hallow's Eve** (Roadrunner)
25 ACROSS THE WATER **Kooga** (High Dragon)
26 RULER OF THE WASTELAND **Chastain** (Roadrunner)
27 TO HELL WITH THE DEVIL **Stryper** (Music For Nations)
28 DON'T GET MAD . . . GET EVEN **Victory** (Metronome)
29 ROCK THE NATIONS **Saxon** (EMI)
30 NIGHT SONGS **Cinderella** (Vertigo)

Compiled by radio station Vercelli, Italy.

Anyone wishing to have their local chart published should send a copy to: ***Kerrang!, charts, Greater London House, London NW1 7QZ***

INDIE METAL

1 2 LOOK WHAT THE CAT DRAGGED IN **Poison** (Music For Nations)
2 8 SPREADING THE DISEASE **Anthrax** (Music For Nations)
3 1 MASTER OF PUPPETS **Metallica** (Music For Nations)
4 5 FASHION BY PASSION **White Sister** (FM/Revolver)
5 4 DOOMSDAY FOR THE DECEIVER **Flotsam And Jetsam** (Roadrunner)
6 3 TO HELL WITH THE DEVIL **Stryper** (Music For Nations)
7 14 KILL 'EM ALL **Metallica** (Music For Nations)
8 11 FISTFUL OF METAL **Anthrax** (Music For Nations)
9 6 RIDE THE LIGHTNING **Metallica** (Music For Nations)
10 12 THE MUSIC FOR NATIONS SINGLES ALBUM **Various** (Music For Nations)
11 9 GAME OVER **Nuclear Assault** (Under One Flag)
12 19 CRIMSON GLORY **Grimson Glory** (Roadrunner)
13 13 MENACE TO SOCIETY **Lizzy Borden** (Roadrunner)
14 7 BEYOND THE GATES **Possessed** (Under One Flag)
15 17 EINE KLEINE NACHTMUSIK **Venom** (Neat)
16 16 FIFTH ANGEL **Fifth Angel** (Roadrunner)
17 15 WHERE LEGEND BEGAN **English Dogs** (Under One Flag)
18 10 ON A STORYTELLER'S NIGHT **Magnum** (FM/Revolver)
19 re THRILL OF A LIFETIME **King Kobra** (FM/Revolver)
20 18 SOLDIERS UNDER COMMAND **Stryper** (Music For Nations)

STAR CHOICE

BRYAN ADAMS
'REIGN IN BLOOD' Slayer (Def Jam/Geffen import)
'SO' Peter Gabriel (Virgin)
'HOLST: THE PLANETS SUITE' Royal Philharmonic Orchestra Conducted By André Previn (Telarc)

STAN BUSH
'FLEX-ABLE' Steve Vai (Food For Thought)
'SO' Peter Gabriel (Virgin)
'4' Foreigner (Atlantic)

BILLY SQUIER
'5150' Van Halen (Warner Brothers)
'ENOUGH IS ENOUGH' Billy Squier (Capitol)
'HIGHER LOVE' Steve Winwood (Island 45)

US HM RADIO

1 1 SOMEWHERE IN TIME **Iron Maiden** (Capitol)
2 2 PEACE SELLS . . . BUT WHO'S BUYING? **Megadeth** (Capitol)
3 4 TO HELL WITH THE DEVIL **Stryper** (Enigma)
4 3 THE DARK **Metal Church** (Elektra)
5 5 REIGN IN BLOOD **Slayer** (Def Jam/Geffen)
6 7 ORGASMATRON **Motörhead** (Profile)
7 9 AWAKEN THE GUARDIAN **Fates Warning** (Metal Blade)
8 13 SLIPPERY WHEN WET **Bon Jovi** (Mercury)
9 11 NIGHT SONGS **Cinderella** (Mercury)
10 — MECHANICAL RESONANCE **Tesla** (Geffen)
11 15 TRILOGY **Yngwie J. Malmsteen** (Polydor)
12 16 TRUE AS STEEL **Warlock** (Mercury)
13 6 VINNIE VINCENT INVASION **Vinnie Vincent** (Chrysalis)
14 17 THE CURSE **Omen** (Metal Blade)
15 14 DANCING UNDERCOVER **Ratt** (Atlantic)
16 18 JUDAS **Helloween** (Noise)
17 re FIGHTING BACK **Paul Di'Anno's Battlezone** (Shattered Records)
18 10 MENACE TO SOCIETY **Lizzy Borden** (Metal Blade)
19 12 GAME OVER **Nuclear Assault** (Combat)
20 — FIFTH ANGEL **Fifth Angel** (Shrapnel)

Compiled by Gail Flug, hard rock co-ordinator for the CMJ Music Report, *830 Willis Ave, Albertson, New York 11507, USA*

IMPORTS

1 THE LADDER **The Ladder** (Atco)
2 LIVE ?!*@ LIKE A SUICIDE **Guns N' Roses** (Uzi Suicide)
3 SWEET SAVAGE **Sweet Savage** (Savage Tunes)
4 POSSESSED BY FIRE **Exumer** (Disaster)
5 AGENT **Agent** (Virgin)
6 REIGN IN BLOOD **Slayer** (Def Jam/Geffen)
7 BEATS FROM A SINGLE DRUM **Rose Tattoo** (Mushroom Records)
8 FOUNDATION **The City** (Chrysalis)
9 LOOKING FOR MORE **Sojourn** (MCR)
10 YOUNG, WILD AND FREE **Brighton Rock** (WEA)

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SINGLES

1	3	OVER THE HILLS AND FAR AWAY **Gary Moore** (10 Records)
2	1	THE FINAL COUNTDOWN **Europe** (Epic)
3	2	LIVIN' ON A PRAYER **Bon Jovi** (Vertigo)
4	—	BEHIND THE MASK **Eric Clapton** (Duck)
5	5	LAND OF CONFUSION **Genesis** (Virgin)
6	—	KING'S CALL **Phil Lynott** (Vertigo)
7	—	FACE THE DAY **Great White** (Capitol)
8	4	DREAMIN' **Status Quo** (Vertigo)
9	11	CREEPING DEATH **Metallica** (Music For Nations)
10	6	SIX TRACK EP **Warlock** (Vertigo)
11	12	MADHOUSE **Anthrax** (Music For Nations)
12	8	YOU GIVE LOVE A BAD NAME **Bon Jovi** (Vertigo)
13	9	STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND **Iron Maiden** (EMI)
14	16	JUMP IN THE FIRE **Metallica** (Music For Nations)
15	15	HE'S BACK (THE MAN BEHIND THE MASK) **Alice Cooper** (MCA)
16	10	WAR **Bruce Springsteen & The E Street Band** (CBS)
17	13	IN THE ARMY NOW **Status Quo** (Vertigo)
18	7	HOLD THE HEART **Big Country** (Mercury)
19	14	95-NASTY **WASP** (Capitol)
20	27	EMOTION IN MOTION **Ric Ocasek** (Geffen)
21	19	THIS LOVE **Bad Company** (Atlantic)
22	21	TO BE A LOVER **Billy Idol** (Chrysalis)
23	23	AMANDA **Boston** (MCA)
24	24	WHO WANTS TO LIVE FOREVER **Queen** (EMI)
25	20	GETTING AWAY WITH MURDER **Meat Loaf** (Arista)
26	29	SLEDGEHAMMER **Peter Gabriel** (Virgin)
27	26	GIRL CAN'T HELP IT **Journey** (CBS)
28	18	BLACK & BLUE **Waysted** (Parlophone)
29	25	HE SAID LOVE **Barclay James Harvest** (Polydor)
30	re	IS THIS LOVE **Survivor** (Scotti Brothers)

ALBUMS

1	—	THE HOUSE OF BLUE LIGHT **Deep Purple** (Polydor)
2	1	SLIPPERY WHEN WET **Bon Jovi** (Vertigo)
3	3	LIVE MAGIC **Queen** (EMI)
4	2	THE FINAL COUNTDOWN **Europe** (Epic)
5	8	7800° FAHRENHEIT **Bon Jovi** (Vertigo)
6	21	LOOK WHAT THE CAT DRAGGED IN **Poison** (Music For Nations)
7	4	BON JOVI **Bon Jovi** (Vertigo)
8	6	BROTHERS IN ARMS **Dire Straits** (Vertigo)
9	23	INVISIBLE TOUCH **Genesis** (Virgin)
10	5	SO **Peter Gabriel** (Virgin)
11	—	LIVE ALIVE **Stevie Ray Vaughan & Double Trouble** (Epic)
12	29	SPREADING THE DISEASE **Anthrax** (Music For Nations)
13	17	NIGHT SONGS **Cinderella** (Vertigo)
14	10	MASTER OF PUPPETS **Metallica** (Music For Nations)
15	18	EAT 'EM AND SMILE **David Lee Roth** (Warner Brothers)
16	26	FASHION BY PASSION **White Sister** (FM/Revolver)
17	40	VINNIE VINCENT INVASION **Vinnie Vincent** (Chrysalis)
18	22	TRILOGY **Yngwie J. Malmsteen** (Polydor)
19	27	DOOMSDAY FOR THE DECEIVER **Flotsam And Jetsam** (Roadrunner)
20	11	SOMEWHERE IN TIME **Iron Maiden** (EMI)
21	7	PEACE SELLS . . . BUT WHO'S BUYING? **Megadeth** (Capitol)
22	15	INDISCREET **FM** (Portrait)
23	28	WHIPLASH SMILE **Billy Idol** (Chrysalis)
24	24	THE DARK **Metal Church** (Elektra)
25	20	TO HELL WITH THE DEVIL **Stryper** (Music For Nations)
26	35	WHEN SECONDS COUNT **Survivor** (Scotti Brothers)
27	16	A KIND OF MAGIC **Queen** (EMI)
28	9	IN THE ARMY NOW **Status Quo** (Vertigo)
29	13	INSIDE THE ELECTRIC CIRCUS **WASP** (Capitol)
30	12	CONSTRICTOR **Alice Cooper** (MCA)
31	14	LIVE 1975-1985 **Bruce Springsteen & The E Street Band** (CBS)
32	36	RIDE THE LIGHTNING **Metallica** (Music For Nations)
33	19	DANCING UNDERCOVER **Ratt** (Atlantic)
34	48	TRUE AS STEEL **Warlock** (Vertigo)
35	30	GREATEST HITS **Queen** (EMI)
36	50	NASTY NASTY **Black N' Blue** (Geffen)
37	45	LIVE AFTER DEATH **Iron Maiden** (EMI)
38	—	GEORGIA SATELLITES **Georgia Satellites** (Elektra)
39	47	ELIMINATOR **ZZ Top** (Warner Brothers)
40	37	GAME OVER **Nuclear Assault** (Under One Flag)
41	42	THE SEER **Big Country** (Mercury)
42	re	CRIMSON GLORY **Crimson Glory** (Roadrunner)
43	re	MENACE TO SOCIETY **Lizzy Borden** (Roadrunner)
44	25	VIGILANTE **Magnum** (Polydor)
45	re	FISTFUL OF METAL **Anthrax** (Music For Nations)
46	39	BEYOND THE GATES **Possessed** (Under One Flag)
47	re	KILL 'EM ALL **Metallica** (Music For Nations)
48	31	POWERSLAVE **Iron Maiden** (EMI)
49	32	5150 **Van Halen** (Warner Brothers)
50	33	AFTERBURNER **ZZ Top** (Warner Brothers)

PLAYLIST

MALCOLM 'DEAD AGAIN' DOME
'FACE TO FACE' Barclay James Harvest (Polydor)
'NIGHTMARE' Jagged Edge (demo)
'A PLACE IN THE HEART' White Sister (track from the 'Fashion By Passion' LP on FM/Revolver)

GEOFF 'BLINDER' BARTON
'MAMA KIN' Guns N' Roses (track from the 'Live ?!*@ Like A Suicide' EP on Uzi Suicide import)
'HOSANNA IN EXCELSIS' Sabbat (demo)
'FOR THOSE WHO DIED' Sabbat (demo)

XAVIER 'GIMME ANOTHER DRINK' RUSSELL
'HALLOWEEN' Helloween (track from 'The Keeper Of The Seven Keys Part I' LP on Noise import)
'LICENSE TO KILL' Malice (track from the 'License To Kill' LP on Atlantic import)
'I WANNA FK YOU'** SDI (track from the 'Satan's Defloration Inc.' LP on Aris import)

KOMING ATTRAKTIONS

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